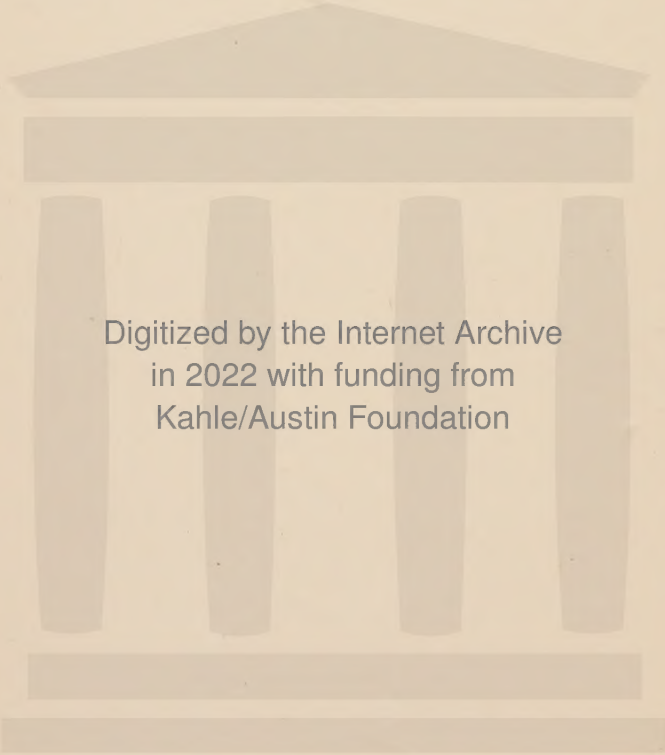




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THE DESIRE OF GOD
IN THE PHILOSOPHY
OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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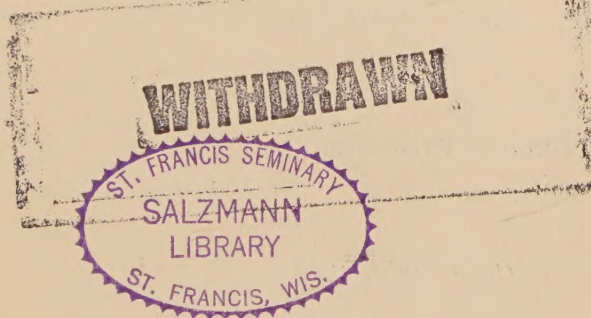
THE DESIRE OF GOD

IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

BY

JAMES E. O'MAHONY

O.S.F.C., M.A., PH.D., AGREGÉ EN PHILOSOPHIE
À L'UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN



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MARIAE IMMACULATAE
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SEDI SAPIENTIAE
IN SIGNUM
GRATITUDINIS.

PREFACE.

Dr. O'Mahony has done me the honour of asking me to write a Preface for his present work. I cannot resist such a kindly invitation and not avail myself of the occasion to add a modest page to those of his so rich, wherein the beautiful theme "In Search of Unity" finds such pleasing relief and harmonious setting?

Certain philosophers, such as Max Scheler, reproach St. Thomas with having partially identified metaphysics and religion. Unable to rid themselves of the Kantian exclusivism which they inherit, they place an impassible chasm between metaphysical thought and religious action. For them, religion, whether natural or supernatural, in no way depends on reasoning, it is based essentially on an experience. Religion has a value for itself; it is entirely autonomous. God is discovered by an intuition and is known just as immediately as the external world.

This internal separatism, this division of the human person, is gradually losing favour. What to-day renders the Thomistic system so congenial to many minds is precisely that vigorous unity which is capable of unifying without confounding and of distinguishing without dividing off into unhappy isolated compartments. "We agree," writes that very penetrating critic, M. Decoster, Professor of Metaphysics at the Université Libre of Brussels, "that the doctrine of St. Thomas constitutes, from the view-point of the analogy of being, the most fully-developed analysis of the degrees of being that has ever been attempted. Judged in this light how little that philosophy—*paupertina philosophia*—an 'Analytic Realism' or a contemporary 'Neo-Realism' has to offer."¹

1.—J. Decoster, *Acte et synthèse*, Bruxelles, 1928, p. 136.

This fecund unity of the Thomistic system, is it to be limited exclusively to the domain of pure philosophy, or may it not be extended in a certain sense to those objects that arise out of supernatural faith and revelation ?

The brilliant historian, M. E. Gilson, Professor at the Sorbonne, is of opinion that the Thomistic synthesis so arrests the movement of rational philosophy that the supernatural can appear therein only as something unattached and entirely from without. In the philosophy of St. Bonaventure, on the contrary, he would see something entirely different. Philosophic wisdom seems to vanish in the flashing illumination of grace, reason seems to lose its own consistency in the presence of faith, nature seems to disappear before the supernatural.

M. Maurice Blondel was certainly right in not being able to resign himself to this "double attitude," as when he declared : " I think it as possible as it is desirable to effect, by means of a more attentive and histological union without any confusion, a transmutation of rational and even mystical elements which, for being irreducibly heterogeneous, do not imply, however, the compatibility of a twofold consciousness in the concrete homogeneity of our destiny, unique and obligatory."¹

To a Franciscan it belonged to show that the opposition which undoubtedly exists between the philosophies of St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure is not as profound as M. Gilson would have it ; and it is Dr. O'Mahony's merit to have done so. Without going so far as M. Blondel, or broaching the more complicated problem of factual destinies and actual realisations, he has been able, while remaining within the province of strict metaphysics, to throw into relief the fecund unity of the Thomistic system which embraces the domain of a possible revelation and a divine vision, the only end of man which is absolutely final.

If in his *Summa Theologica* St. Thomas writes : " There is for man a twofold destiny : one which is proportionate to his nature and accessible without external aid, the other

1.—Cf. *L'itinéraire philosophique de Maurice Blondel*, p. 247.

which surpasses his own resources and which divine aid alone can procure for him,"¹ we may also read in the same *Summa* that "The supreme happiness of man consists in his most noble operation, which is that of intellectual activity, and if by this man cannot see God, then either man can never be perfectly happy, or the object of this perfect felicity will be some object other than God." But to advocate such an alternative "Is to differ from the teaching of faith, since according to the latter the final perfection of the rational creature must be found in its Principle of existence, seeing that a thing is perfect in the measure in which it attains to its principle. But it is also to speak a language contrary to reason, since man discovers within himself the natural desire of knowing the cause once he has seen the effect ; and out of this has arisen both wonder and admiration."²

It will be a pleasure for the reader to remark the consummate art with which, in order to liberate St. Thomas from even the appearance of contradiction, the author employs the distinction, already indicated by the Angelic Doctor himself, between tendency as such taken in itself as necessarily possible towards the vision of God on the one hand, and on the other, the actualisation, strictly of the divine order and entirely gratuitous, of this unalterable tendency towards God ; and also to notice the cleverness with which he distinguishes, in this also following Aquinas, between natural appetite as such, one, spontaneous and necessary, and elicit appetite at once multiple, reflex and necessarily free in the intelligent creature who has at his disposal a multiplicity of means in view of the final end.

To have an adequate idea of the amount of energy expended by Dr. O'Mahony in rounding off an embrasive synthesis wherein the many elements scattered throughout the writings of St. Thomas find their true and harmonious setting, it were necessary to have studied closely the very difficult problem he undertook to elucidate. He alone will fully appreciate the author's labour who has himself experienced, to his cost

1.—Ia-Iae., Q. LXII, art. 1.

2.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 1.

perhaps, the difficulties of the route to be traversed. All the more so, as Dr. O'Mahony has consistently concealed the labour of his reflection beneath an apparent simplicity which is content to unfold little by little the principles of solution. It is particularly towards the close of his excellent study that one has the impression of being in full light : the shadows have vanished one after the other in his ascent towards the summits of integral truth.

Already Dr. O'Mahony had been chosen, in virtue of a Travelling Studentship in Philosophy, to represent the National University of Ireland abroad. He has merited well of his University. And now, by his present work, he becomes a brilliant Agrégé of the Catholic University of Louvain. On both scores I rejoice and felicitate him. The scientific relations between Louvain and Ireland are of long standing. Since the War these relations have again been taken up and thereby a cooperation which has ever been fecund is assured. I am convinced that Dr. O'Mahony will contribute to this cooperation, and I thank him in the name of the Alma Mater Lovaniensis which he has honoured by his fruitful labour.

N. BALTHASAR,

July 16th, 1928.

*Professor of Metaphysics at the
Catholic University of Louvain.*

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INTRODUCTION

THE present work was undertaken during a four years' stay at the Catholic University, Louvain. It was in accordance with the statutes of the National University, Ireland, that I chose Louvain for the purpose of further research. As the period allotted by the University from which I came covered only two years, it was due to the kindness of my superiors that a more prolonged stay was rendered possible; I take this occasion to thank them cordially.

My previous readings in philosophy had in a sense prepared the way for the present essay. A problem set for the Pierce Malone Scholarship—an inter-University competitive examination in Mental and Moral Science—suggested my post-graduate research, which had to do with "Scientific Ideals." Dissatisfied with certain current presentations of Theism, I attempted to show in a final chapter of a thesis, presented for Travelling Studentship in 1920, that in the judgement we have the central problem of philosophy. It seemed to me then that every judgement, because an affirmation of being, covered a certain dynamism, and that the sense of this dynamism was given precisely by the soul's desire of God.

At that period, however, I was not fully conscious of the difficulties to which a full development of such a theme might give rise. It seemed to me necessary to place the question of man's desire of God in the wider metaphysical context of a return of all being to its Source. It was not difficult to see that, viewed in relation to God, Pure Act, the finite is that which is characterised by potentiality and

imperfection ; that it would presuppose a tendency beyond itself towards a final end ; that it sends mind beyond it in search of its ultimate intelligibility and that, properly understood, its ultimate metaphysical formula might be said to be Becoming. So to view the finite in relation to God is not to subscribe to an absolute dynamism, since within the plane of the relative it is clear that the finite, characterised as it is by a real distinction of essence and existence, of potency and act, is not essentially active: *actio sequitur esse*. But it is to vindicate for the finite the *possibility* of tendency within the limits set for it by its nature, and to indicate the ultimate orientation of this tendency to God.

In thus viewing the finite in its true metaphysical context, it seemed to me that an excellent opportunity would afford itself of presenting to the modern English-speaking world an aspect of Thomism that is all but unknown. It is characteristic of the times that Mr. A. E. Taylor has recently pointed to what may be considered the true actuality of St. Thomas. Answering the question proposed by the Zybura-Research as to "Whether Scholasticism is capable of making any valuable contribution to the solution of present-day problems," he writes: "I should say yes, remarking particularly that it seems to me that *the Scholastic metaphysic is specially valuable as a corrective to the Kantian substitution of a theory of knowledge for a theory of being (a theory of the objects of our knowledge)*."¹ But we have no theory of being until we have an explanation of becoming, and in Thomistic metaphysic we have no theory of becoming until we have grasped his theory of the desire of God.

Not many years ago, Mr. B. Russell placidly compared the universe of St. Thomas to the neat interior of a Dutch cottage, where all was order, stability and harmony.² It seemed to me that a study of the desire of God which would show desire to be the ultimate metaphysical unification of the finite in regard to the Infinite, of the relative in regard to the Absolute,

1.—Zybura, *Present Day Thinkers and the New Scholasticism*, 1926, p. 69. Italics ours.

2.—*Our Knowledge of the External World*, 1914, p. 10.

must lead to a view of the Thomistic universe as something strikingly different from that static and simple harmony which Mr. Russell thought he discovered therein. Desire in the vocabulary of St. Thomas is just that tendency of all being to its perfection, to its proper good, to the unity of its being.¹ In the metaphysical order it signifies that relation to intelligibility which the "form" of each being necessitates,² and the possibility of tending towards its ultimate perfection, which the very relation of finality implies. But as the finite is that which properly speaking is in potency and thereby incapable of giving itself that perfection which it desires, St. Thomas very properly looked to God for the intelligibility of its tendencies. The very harmony of creation for him results from a common orientation and tendency towards the

. . . one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.

A closer acquaintance with the philosophy of St. Thomas, however, convinced me that I could not stop at the general exposition of the return of being to God. A problem of a very particular kind had to be broached by him who would undertake to expose the Thomistic view of the return of intelligent creation in particular to its Source. The passages wherein Aquinas speaks of the soul's desire of God's vision were too numerous to be overlooked. A real problem of Thomistic exegesis arose in the presence of the apparently contradictory way in which he formulates his views on this question. No one has more clearly shown the differences that exist between the two orders of nature and the supernatural than St. Thomas, and yet, while he declares that the vision of God is beyond the powers of any created intelligence, he does not cease to repeat that there is in man a natural desire to see God. And while he distinguishes a two-fold end of man, he seems to pass from one to the other apparently

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. VIII, art. 1; Ia-IIae., Q. LV, art. 2, ad 1; Ia-IIae., Q. LXXVIII, art. 1; Ia-IIae., Q. XXIX, art. 4; Ia-IIae., Q. XCIV, art. 3; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 3, ad 2; C.G., lib. I, cap. XXXVII; C.G., lib. III, cap. XVI; C.G., lib. II, cap. LXXIX.

2.—Ia., Q. XCI, art. 3; Ia., Q. XXI, art. 4; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 3, ad 2; C.G., lib. II, cap. XLIX.

oblivious of the difficulties that such a passage must create if we speak of both ends as naturally desired. How were such passages to be interpreted? How find an embracing synthesis wherein his views might be inserted?

Even at the cost of being cursory in the exposition of the more general metaphysical question of the return of being to God, and of being obliged to presuppose in large part the metaphysic of St. Thomas, it seemed to me more enticing to attack the more difficult problem to which such passages of his writings gave rise, especially, as but recently it seems to have evoked a new interest.¹ My project has been to realise such a synthesis. While personal reflection may have led to an appreciation of the general problem, for the present work I cannot lay the same claim. Its view-point is historical. Its aim is a faithful exegesis of Thomistic writings. Convinced that a metaphysician of the calibre of St. Thomas has not blatantly contradicted himself, it seemed possible, by entering into the spirit of his general metaphysic, to discover the key to the difficulties of his antithetical pronouncements, and then give the reader an elaboration of the Saint's synthesis from within. In the interests of unity I have sought to penetrate the Saint's mind and to express in modern phraseology what St. Thomas puts so forcibly in his medieval Latin.

1.—Cf. G. De Broglie, S.J., *De la place du surnaturel dans la philosophie de saint Thomas*.—*Recherches de science religieuse*, t. XIV (1924), pp. 193 sqq.; *Ibid.*, pp. 481-496; *Ibid.*, t. XV (1925), pp. 1-50; Communication de M. G. De Broglie "sur la place de la vision beatifique dans la philosophie de saint Thomas".—*Revue de philosophie*, XXIV (1924), pp. 441 sqq.; Autour de la notion thomiste de la béatitude.—*Archives de philosophie*, III (1925), pp. 199-240. A. Blanche, O.P., Note concernant l'étude de M. G. De Broglie.—*Revue de philosophie*, XXIV (1924), pp. 444-449. R. Mulard, O.P., Désir naturel de connaître et vision béatifique.—*Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIV (1925), pp. 5-19. P. Martin, O.P., De valore scientifico doctrinae moralis S. Thomae.—*Ephemerides Lovanienses*, I (1924), pp. 340-354. For a review of the preceding see M. J. Bliguet, *Bulletin thomiste*, III (1926), pp. 179-181. A. Gardeil, O.P., Le désir de voir Dieu.—*Revue thomiste*, XXXI (1926), pp. 381-410 incorporated into his recent work, *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique*, Paris, 1927. G. Laporta, O.S.B., Natuur en Genade.—*Ons Geloof* (1926), no. II. J. De Brandt, *Menschelijk Verlangen en bovennatuurlijk Geluk*.—*Ons Geloof* (1927), no. XIII. E. Brisbois, S.J., Désir naturel et vision de Dieu.—*Nouvelle revue théologique*, LIV (1927), pp. 81-96. P. Boyer, S.J., Recension des archives de philosophie (1925), III, cahier 2.—*Gregorianum*, VII (1926), pp. 273-274.

This will explain my attitude which at times must seem a personal one rather than that of the Saint whom I am expounding. In reality the arguments I advance are those of St. Thomas. There are no reasonings, so far as I am aware, that are not upheld by the Saint's text itself. If I have stressed the idea of a natural desire of God's vision, it was because Aquinas himself so frequently insists upon it, and in the sincere attempt to systematise his views on this particular question with the general principles of his philosophy.

At the outset two general difficulties presented themselves against my project. On the one hand, it might seem that philosophy could have nothing pertinent to say of this particular problem, and to open it up in philosophy seemed merely to lay myself open to objections from theologians. On the other, was it not temerarious to attempt an interpretation of the Saint's teaching where the great commentators themselves had so differed?

On the first score, it did not seem to me impossible to find traces of such a problem in a purely philosophic tradition. The idea of a return of being to God is part of the general philosophic heritage, and in a Plato there are certain surmisings as to a vision of Eternal Beauty. At the time of St. Thomas himself, there are reasons to believe that the question of the desire of God's vision had also an interest for philosophers little interested in a divine revelation.¹ Moreover, the general positions of his own metaphysic, which was an attempt to view all in the divine perspective, would seem to give rise to such a problem. While the *fact* of man's destination to such a vision was evidently beyond the powers of reason, depending as it did on the free will of God, might

1.—At least, it will be admitted, that the general problem of the relations of dogma and philosophy remains an objective problem for the historian of St. Thomas. P. H. Wicksteed was led naturally to discuss the question of St. Thomas's view of the desire of God's vision when he wrote his work, *The Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy Illustrated from the Works of St. Thomas Aquinas*, the Hibbert Lectures, 2nd series, London, 1920. It is one of the very few works in English that has anything to say of our problem. In this connection the work of M. Durantal, *Le retour à Dieu*, Paris, 1918, may also be cited.

not metaphysics as the science of the necessary aspects of being have something to say as to its *possibility*? Without pretending to say the last word on such a problem, might not philosophy attempt at least to show that, in the thought of Aquinas, reason could examine the question of the possibility of such a vision?

As for the great diversity among commentators of Aquinas, it seemed to me that this was rather an encouragement than an obstacle. It satisfied me that there was no fixed tradition, and the views put forward, as well as the difficulties experienced, proved a guide towards a faithful exposition of the Master's thought.

This diversity among the better known commentators of St. Thomas is very striking from the outset. In the sixteenth century, within the Dominican tradition, three divergent interpretations arose in quick succession. Cajetan was apparently the first to have experienced certain difficulties with the Saint's teaching. And later, when the well-known Thomist, John of St. Thomas, set himself to indicate the value of Cajetan's views, he himself was led by a rather complicated, though strictly philosophic method, to establish the possibility of God's vision. For while, he argued, the view of nature aroused in us the desire of seeing God as Cause of creation, the view of miracles, the possibility of which was guaranteed by experience, reason and faith, might excite in us the desire of seeing God as He is in Himself.¹ The views of Cajetan, which are examined in the text, were rejected by his contemporary Sylvester Ferrariensis, and to-day by the well-known Thomist, Père Gardeil, O.P.²

It is not without significance that Cajetan had confined his commentaries to the *Summa Theologica*. A cursory perusal of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* impresses one with the insistent way in which St. Thomas reverts to the soul's desire of God's vision. When Sylvester Ferrariensis took up

1.—In Iam, disp. 12, art. 3, n. 20. Cf. *Ibid.*, n. 13 and 18.

2.—*Loc. cit.*, p. 392; also by R. Mulard, O.P., *loc. cit.* Cajetan is followed, on the other hand, by N. Del Prado, O.P., *De veritate fundamentali philosophiae christianae*, 1911, pp. 618 sqq., and apparently by P. Paluscsák, O.P., *Imago Dei in homine*.—*Xenia Thomistica*, 2 (1925), pp. 119-154.

its commentary it was natural to expect that he would reject Cajetan and find a place for such a desire. He admitted that it was possible for man to entertain a desire of the vision of God as First Cause.¹ In that he is followed by many modern Thomists. Some, as for instance Père Pègues, O.P.,² and M. J. Maritain³ adhere to the literal theory of Sylvester. Others, as for instance Père Hugueny, O.P.,⁴ seem to go further in the way indicated by him, and it is Père Gardeil's opinion that for Sylvester Ferrariensis it is really the Divine Substance itself which is the object of this desire.⁵

A third commentator of the sixteenth century, D. Soto, O.P., seems to have gone further than either of the two previous ones. As his terminology, so it seems to me, is not infrequently Scotistic, and as I have had to mark the differences that separate St. Thomas from Duns Scotus on this question, I have refrained from utilising Soto in the text.⁶

Much might be written of the controversies that arose among theologians since the sixteenth century concerning the natural desire of God's vision.⁷ Interested rather in Thomistic exegesis it suffices to recall that the discussion was reopened in the last century by the well-known work of Joachim Sestili, *De naturali intelligentis animae capacitate et appetitu intuendi divinam essentiam*, published at Rome in 1896. Since then quite a literature has grown around the

1.—*In Libros Quatuor Contra Gentiles* (MCM), lib. III, cap. LI.

2.—*Commentaire littéral sur la somme théologique*, vol. VIII, p. 168.

3.—*Antimoderne*, p. 80.

4.—A quel bonheur sommes-nous destinés ?—*Revue thomiste* (1905), pp. 29-43 ; *Critique et catholique*, Paris, 1914.

5.—*Loc. cit.*, p. 393.

6.—As for instance the following : *Homini inest appetitus naturalis ad illam veram beatitudinem quae in Dei visione consistit, non dico appetitum elicited sed naturalem appetitum hoc est inclinationem naturalem et pondus naturae quo in illum finem propendet, sicut gravitas in lapide* . . . —*Comm. F. D. Soto in IV libros Sententiarum*, Venice, 1584, disp. XLIX, Q. II, art. 1.

7.—Cf. H. Ligeard, *Le rapport de la nature et du surnaturel d'après les théologiens scolastiques du XIII^e e au XVIII^e e siècle*.—*Revue pratique d'apologétique*, Mars (1908), pp. 772-784 ; *La théologie scolastique et la transcendance du surnaturel*, Paris, 1908. Scheeben, *Dogmatique*, trad. franc. par l'abbé Belet, Paris, 1881, t. III, p. 694-697. Gratry, *La connaissance de Dieu* 6e éd. (1864), Note A. F. X. Jansen, S.J., *Baius et le baianisme*, Louvain, 1927, Note 54 (bis), p. 163.

subject. Besides the articles referred to, the interesting work of P. Rousselot, S.J., *L'intellectualisme de saint Thomas*, may be cited, and more recently still, Père Maréchal, S.J., has espoused the view, in his striking work, *Le point de départ de la métaphysique*, cahier V., that in the theory of St. Thomas a natural desire of God's vision must be admitted.

From the foregoing rapid survey, the preoccupation of those acquainted with the writings of St. Thomas to find a place for his theory of the natural desire of God's vision, will be apparent. In the work which follows the same preoccupation is present. In addition, it seemed to me necessary to find the key to the solution of the antinomies of the Saint's expression. Seeking for an objective foundation for them, it did not seem impossible to find it in the very nature of the finite intelligence as such. An important distinction put me in the way of seeing into the difficulties that were more apparent than real. This distinction was that which Aquinas places between the order of finality and that of realisation.

Nor was this distinction invented as an ingenious solution. It is really fundamental in the whole Thomistic system. If, as I shall have occasion to indicate, mind was capable of giving to nature a perfection towards which it tends without of itself being capable of realising its own potential intelligibility, it was but natural to realise that mind itself was open for a perfection which of itself it was incapable of realising. Indeed the so-called tendency of Nature was but a shadow of that tendency of mind, which by its faculties of intelligence and will, possessed, as Aquinas puts it, a certain immediate relation to the Deity. I have repeatedly insisted on this continuity, which St. Thomas marked in the universe, the better to insinuate the possibility of rounding off the Thomistic synthesis.

This important distinction was furthermore suggested by the constant way in which St. Thomas spoke of man's natural end as that which was realisable by nature's forces left to themselves. Seeing that the natural end thus appertained to the order of realisation, I had not far to seek out the reason

for the antinomies of the Saint's expression. It was that in his mind this natural end did not exclude the finality of the rational nature for the higher end. For granted the realisation of mind by its natural faculties, such a final end was necessarily subordinate to the really Final End which lay beyond it. This was evident, because by its natural powers alone no finite intelligence could be in immediate possession of God. The really Final End, as St. Thomas insists, is not something that belongs to the finite nature as such : *non est naturae sed naturae finis*. As long as the creature is absent from God, there is necessarily a tendency towards God, and tendency, in the view of St. Thomas, envisages its object in its reality. Granted that in order of realisation, this tendency attained God as the Principle of nature, yet from the viewpoint of finality and of tendency that does not preclude the fact that such tendency was towards God Himself. And taking tendency in its widest metaphysical sense, it has to be admitted, in the view of St. Thomas, that within this order of finality there was still the "capacity" for something greater. Now this is what St. Thomas expressed in what I have styled the principle of solution : that for God alone beatitude is natural, and for the finite its final end.

As frequently happens, the order of exposition is not the order of discovery. And if I have chosen the foregoing order of exposition it was only after mature reflection. For granting that intelligence and will could not put the finite mind in immediate possession of God, yet they are calculated to show that nothing finite could satisfy the nature whence they spring, and in this way lay bare where we must seek for perfect beatitude. Everyone acquainted with Scholastic philosophy is aware of the appeal to this quasi-infinity of mind to prove that in God alone man can find perfect happiness. Accordingly, once I had discovered what I deemed the key to the antinomies of the Saint's expression, it seemed advisable to appeal to the characteristics of these faculties to exclude any difficulties that might arise.

Two such difficulties did arise, difficulties that were common to many interpreters of St. Thomas. In the first place, it

has seemed to many that because the natural object of intelligence and will was "the true in general" and "the good in general" there could be no question of a tendency to the vision of God which was something preeminently determinate. Arising out of this there was the view that if there is a desire of this vision, it must be considered as an "elicit" act, and as thereby opposed to a natural inclination of the will itself.

As against the first difficulty, it did not seem difficult to show that, according to St. Thomas, the search for "the good in general" was an implicit and equivalent search for God. Sylvester Ferrariensis, as I have said, would, on Père Gardeil's showing, have held that the vision of the Divine Substance was the specifying object of man's intellectual tendencies. Père Gardeil himself is deterred from admitting such a specification by the absence of an intuition on our part here below of the necessary connection between God's vision and man's beatitude.

As for the second difficulty, I have essayed to show that a hard and fast distinction between the act of will as elicit and the natural tendency of the will is really Scotistic not Thomistic. It appears to me that one main cause of the present divergencies amongst Thomists is that unwittingly many have forsaken the terminology and teaching of the Master on an important point. The same has not to be said of Sylvester Ferrariensis. He seems to have adhered to the terminology of St. Thomas, and by a direct reference to the Saint's text I hope to have made it clear that from the viewpoint of will-act St. Thomas places a distinction only among the elicit acts themselves. This distinction has to do with elective or free acts of will as opposed to the natural tendencies of will as nature. Among the elicit acts of will St. Thomas recognised that some expressed the natural tendency of the will, as for instance that of will towards its final end. In view of that, there could be no point in the Thomistic system in opposing elicit and innate acts of will. Through the acts of will St. Thomas reasoned to will's nature, but as for him the relation of knowledge to will was essential

and not accessory, there could be no act of will that was not also dependent on intelligence, and as the object of intelligence was the "true in general," there is no room in his system for what Duns Scotus or Soto called a *pondus naturae* in the strict sense in which they understood it. On the contrary St. Thomas ever contrasted the tendencies of will towards its proper object—*bonum in communi*—with the gravitational tendencies of natural objects to a determinate term. But that did not prevent him from seeing that the tendency towards beatitude was implicitly and equivalently a tendency towards God, who alone could supply that beatitude of which mind was "capable."¹

Neither did Aquinas confound elicit acts of will with explicit acts of will, and this is also important to bear in mind. Many experience a certain difficulty in conceiving how there could be a natural desire of the vision of God which is something unknown. But those who entertain such a difficulty are not really viewing the matter as St. Thomas viewed it. For him, it is less a question of an actual and explicit desire than of a metaphysical analysis of mind's native tendencies. When he wrote that all men desire the knowledge of God, he was not thinking of the many who did not seem particularly keen on acquiring such knowledge. Likewise, when his metaphysical insight revealed to him the desire of God's vision as characteristic of the rhythm of intellectual development, it did not occur to him to ask if man actually and explicitly desired such a vision. Such an actual and explicit desire would have had a two-fold inconvenience for him, on the one hand, of being conditional on

1.—It is interesting to remark that D. G. Laporta, O.S.B., by a close analysis of the texts of St. Thomas, in a Note furnished to *Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses*, V (1928), pp. 257-277, has independently arrived at similar conclusions as to the question of elicit acts of will and innate tendencies. Apart from a certain predilection for Soto which I do not share (see p. 257), there are many points in common between his views and mine. I ask myself, however, if he also has not unduly opposed natural tendencies of rational nature and its elicit acts. If the elicit acts of will do not contain implicitly or equivalently the natural tendency of the nature whence they emanate, how can they serve as signs of that transcendental relation of the nature to its end which, we are agreed, is what St. Thomas meant by "natural desire?"

the divine munificence, and on the other of presupposing the very thing he wished so much to prove, namely the objective possibility of the divine vision.

Readers of St. Thomas must resolutely guard against that psychological meaning which the word "desire" so spontaneously evokes. The preoccupations of the Saint were deeper: they were metaphysical. The common root-meaning of desire he derived from a metaphysical analysis of being. As I have indicated, desire for him signified precisely that intelligible relation of a particular nature to its end; it is essentially a relation of finality. While St. Thomas very clearly distinguishes desire as it appertains to the different grades of being, inanimate, animate and rational, he was well aware that this opposition was not an absolute one. His metaphysical insight into the activities of intellect and will revealed the fundamental orientation of the intellectual nature whence they emanated. If these faculties were incapable of fully realising the "capacities" of this nature, they might at least indicate wherein its final end was to be found, and thus point to the only object that could impart to it, its full and adequate intelligibility. Starting with these faculties, which have a necessary priority in the order of investigation, he was able to see, that in the metaphysical order, there was a transcendental relation of the intellectual nature as such, to a final end.

Now it is in this metaphysical context that the adage, *natura nihil facit inane*, must find its place. Having to do with the metaphysical order of intelligibility and essences, it does not envisage the order of factual realisation as such. In no way, therefore, could the natural desire of which St. Thomas spoke be said to imply on the part of the creature an "exigency," which has to do with the order of factual realisation, of the vision of God. In my final chapter I have attempted to show what such a desire implies in the metaphysical order, and to indicate to what extent St. Thomas realised his aim of proving the objective possibility of God's vision.

It may not be without a certain utility to add a word as to the recent controversies which have centred around the desire of beatitude as a special proof for the existence of God.¹ It has not been my intention to enter into this controversy. St. Thomas does not seem to have adverted to such an argument as a *special* proof, and I have no doubt that it is reducible to the *Quarta Via*. The march of the Saint's thought presupposes as known the existence of God. It is after he has proved in the opening articles of the *Summa Theologica* the existence of God that in the *Ia-IIae.*, he establishes that God is the Final End. And if we reflect that mind is not primitively endowed with the idea of God's positive possibility, it is only on the presupposition of God's existence that he could appeal, as he does, to the characteristic development of knowledge from effect to cause.

The reader will readily understand that in a work of this kind I have had to keep to the text of St. Thomas as at present established, especially as we are as yet far from having a definitive text of the Saint's writings.² Where possible I have had recourse to the recent Leonine edition, as yet incomplete. Otherwise I refer to the Vivès edition (Paris, 1871-1880 : 34 vols. in-4), except for the Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle where I refer to the more convenient edition of Cathala (Taurini, MCMXV).

It is a pleasure to express my indebtedness to the different writers who have taken part in the recent controversies which have arisen in connection with man's desire of God's vision.

1.—G. M. Manser, O.P., Das Streben nach Glückseligkeit als Beweis für das Dasein Gottes.—*Divus Thomas*, I (1923), pp. 44-50, 146-164. J. Gredt, O.S.B., Der Gottesbeweis aus der Glückseligkeit.—*Divus Thomas*, II (1924), pp. 92-100. Manser, Erwiderung.—*Ibid.*, pp. 100-104. M. D. Roland-Gosselin, O.P., Le désir du bonheur et l'existence de Dieu.—*Rev. des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIII (1924), pp. 162-172. Cf. N. Balthasar's review of foregoing.—*Bulletin thomiste*, II (1925), pp. 210-214.

2.—Cf. A. Pelzer, L'édition léonine de la Somme contre les Gentils.—*Rev. néo-scol.*, XXII (1920), pp. 217-245. As regards authenticity and chronology, the reader is invited to consult P. Mandonnet, *Des écrits authentiques de S. Thomas d'Aquin*, 3e éd. (1910) Fribourg ; Chronologie sommaire de la vie et des œuvres de S. Thomas.—*Rev. des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIX (1920), pp. 142-152. M. Grabmann, *La somme théologique*, French trans., Paris. The English reader will find useful general indications on the extent of St. Thomas' works in E. Gilson, *Le thomisme*, English trans. by E. Bullough, 1924, Cambridge, pp. 3 sqq.

At an early age the writings of A. D. Sertillanges, O.P.,¹ and of P. Rousselot, S.J.,² had for me a special charm. To Père Gardeil, O.P., I owe much for his elucidation of the Thomistic theory of the analogy of being.³ If I have presumed to differ in my present work with such an eminent exponent of Thomism, it has been only after mature reflection and with a certain diffidence. Despite the differences of our views, his article, *La structure analogique de l'intelligence*, has been of much utility.⁴

To my Professors of the Higher Institute of Philosophy, Louvain, I express my gratitude not only for their teaching but for the noble example of their lives. To Dr. Léon Canon Noël, President, I am indebted for the benefit I have derived from his stimulating lectures on the philosophies of Kant and Hegel. I wish also to thank Dr. Auguste Mansion for criticisms and valuable suggestions. A special word of gratitude is due to Dr. N. Balthasar, Professor of Metaphysics, who was ever ready to enter into the details of my problem and bring his profound knowledge of the mind of St. Thomas to bear on any difficulties that occurred.

I wish also to recall here the names of my Professors at University College, Cork, from whom I received my first lessons in Philosophy. It is not without emotion that I mention the late Dr. Cyril, O.S.F.C., M.A., who was a really decisive influence in my philosophical career. Very Rev. Dr. Edwin, O.S.F.C., will, I trust, accept this expression of my gratitude for his kind encouragement. I wish also to thank Rev. Fr. Kieran, O.S.F.C., M.A., for the characteristically kind way in which he undertook the laborious task of proof-reading. Messrs. Purcell and Co., Printers, Cork, deserve a word of appreciation for their patience and efficiency.

Louvain, May 18th, 1928.

1.—*S. Thomas d' Aquin*, 2 vols., 4e éd., Paris, 1925.

2.—*L'intellectualisme de S. Thomas*, 2e éd., Paris, 1924.

3.—Faculté du divin ou faculté de l'être.—*Rev. néo-scol*, XIII (1911), pp. 90-100.

4.—*Rev. thomiste*, XXXII (1927), pp. 3-19.

PART I.

THE PROBLEM :
IN SEARCH OF UNITY.

*Oportet omnia reducere
in unum principium primum.
De Potentia, Q. III, art. 6.*

*Non enim ens de multis aequivoce
dicitur, sed per analogiam, et sic
oportet fieri reductionem in unum.
Contra Gentiles, lib. II, cap. XV.*

CHAPTER I.

IN SEARCH OF UNITY.

PHILOSOPHY is a search for unity. On the horizon of human efforts at reflection the ideal of an ultimate unity ever hovers. Whether it be regarded as humanly attainable or not, the guiding star of unity has never waned in the philosophic firmament.

Mind is imperiously synthetic. It demands that experience answers to its fundamental exigencies. The universe is not a democracy of individuals. Mind holds the sceptre. It rises up beyond the limits of surrounding matter. It moves over apparent chaos. It surveys the vast expanse of things beneath it in search of unity. Philosophy has ever been a search for the ultimate intelligible unity of experience.

With unerring insight the first philosophers fixed on the One and the Multiple—*ἐν καὶ πολλὰ*¹—as the root-problem of philosophy for all time. And it was with a certain joyful intoxication that the two remarkable thinkers of the pre-Socratic period, Parmenides the Eleatic and Heraclitus of Ephesus, proclaimed to the world the antithetical result of their investigations. Parmenides affirmed the absolute unity of being : Heraclitus the absolute unity of becoming.²

The conclusion was a hasty one. Appeal as they may, with a superciliousness begotten of their new discovery, against the feeble-minded crowd, as with Parmenides,³ or to

1.—Plato, *Philebus* 15 D.

2.—The founder of the Eleatic School is supposed to have been Xenophanes. Parmenides wrote about 470 B.C. His whole position is that being is, that non-being is not and cannot be, and hence there is merely being ; the opposition of being and non-being is complete ; there is no question of degree. Being is one, unique, immobile and unbegotten. Cf. Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. 2 Aufl., Bd. I., 1906, p. 117, Parmenides *Fragm.* 5 ; p. 119, Parmenides, *Fragm.* 8. Heraclitus, about 536-470 B.C., is well-known for his conception of the universe as a perpetual flux.

3.—Cf. Diels, *op. cit.*, Parmenides, *Fragm.* 6.

a higher intuition of the logos, as with Heraclitus,¹ experience contested the absolute power of the human mind; it threw down the gauntlet of its own imperative exigencies. Succeeding philosophers were forced to break up the unique and unrelieved unity of being or becoming into minor and more articulate unities. Not to speak of Atomism, which was just the merest disintegration of the materialistic being of Parmenides, the efforts of Socrates, of Plato, and of Aristotle, were directed towards finding in experience the subordinate unity of the concept.

A definite achievement was the happy result of Aristotelian realism. If Plato had discovered the idea, Aristotle brought it back to earth; embodied in material things, the intelligibility of experience was guaranteed. A definite stage was reached in mind's grapple with the problem of the multiple and the one. It marked the success of the concept, intelligible and univocal, over an unintelligible unrelated multiplicity.

Yet, in his success, Aristotle himself wavers. His discovery of the specific unity of things was truly a reduction of multiplicity, but it was a unity which not only did not exclude all idea of number, but essentially included the individuals to which it had a reference. It is here that Aristotle no longer speaks with the same assurance. He is certain as to the generic discontinuity of the real, but is he equally sure of the individual discontinuity of things? True, the individual exists, but for Aristotle whence comes the intelligibility of the individual? ²

With Aristotle philosophy was in a position to retrace its steps to a reconsideration of the antimonies of Parmenides

1.—To all men it is given, said Heraclitus, to know themselves and to be wise. But most men follow sense instead of following nature and finding what is common to all things . . . it is only by listening to the logos that one may come to know the unity of the whole.—Heraclitus (Diels) *Fragms.* 116, 2, 112, 41, 42, particularly 80. For an instructive account of the evolution of Greek Intellectualism see M. D. Roland-Gosselin, O.P., *L'évolution de l'intellectualisme grec de Thales à Aristote*—*Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 7 année, no. I. (1913), p. 5-25.

2.—J. Chevalier, *La science et le réel*, p. 9-10.—*Où chercher le réel*, Paris, 1927; *La notion du nécessaire chez Aristote*, Paris, 1924, pp. 183, 184. See also A. Mansion, *La genèse de l'oeuvre d'Aristote*.—*Rev. néo-scol.*, XXVIII (1927), pp. 325 sqq.

and Heraclitus. As a good grammarian, Aristotle had seen that the predicate, being, might have different meanings. With him it had been disengaged from its merely materialistic and univocal signification. Reviewing the pre-Socratic development, St. Thomas compares it to the gradual formation of human knowledge which commences in sense and only later attains the intelligible object, being. Because accidental forms, he remarks, are immediately sensible, the early philosophers declared all forms to be mere accidents that appear on the surface of a primeval substance which for them was matter.¹ By rising to the concept of being as something analogical Plato and Aristotle were on the true way towards final unity.

(1.) THE UNITY OF BEING.

St. Thomas had an aristocratic view of philosophy. The philosophy of being, in particular, appeared to him as the summit of human attainment. Before the dawn of Greek Philosophy there was a long past, where mythological imagining held supreme sway. The rude conceptions of a Thales, of an Anaximenes, or of an Anaxagoras marked an attempt on the part of thought to discover the white light of truth, but the slow advance from purely materialistic and animistic conceptions was symbolic. Only the Princes of Greek Philosophy had any conception of the intelligible content of being as such. Phylogenetically, a comparatively true concept of being was of relatively late origin.

Ontogenetically, the same must be said. As long as youth or passion casts shadows on the clear light of intelligence, as long as imagination is turbulent and there is riot of fancy, one is not apt to undertake the study of being. The philosopher cannot rest content with happy images that he

1.—Postiores philosophi, ut Plato, Aristoteles, et eorum sequaces, pervenerunt ad considerationem *ipsius esse* universalis.—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 5. The evolution of pre-Socratic thought is given similarly in Ia., Q. XLIV, art. 2.

may gather from the prism of creation.¹ Philosophy demands a climb up rugged hills and beyond the pictured beauties of sense and imagination, to austere summits where only spirit breathes and a silence that has something of eternity reigns. Being surpasses all imaginings; it has no horizon save the infinite; intellect alone may grasp it.²

The ascent of mind to being as such, the veritable object of metaphysical reflection,³ St. Thomas characterised as a progressive process of abstraction. He there laid down once for all the basis of a true hierarchy of human knowledge. It would be an error to think that such an arrangement of knowledge was due merely to subjective exigencies. As matter is the ultimate cause of indetermination, it is in virtue of a certain relative independence in regard to matter that the formal objects of the different sciences attain to an objective consistency for thought. Some objects depend on matter, not only in their being, but for thought itself, in such a way that they are necessarily bound up with matter;⁴ these form properly the first degree of abstraction, the starting point of investigation, and are the object of what St. Thomas called physical philosophy. If this independence in regard to matter follows on our mode of apprehension, without implying for that an objective independence in reality, we are in presence of the second degree of abstraction, which has to do with mathematical science; the quantitative aspect of things is linked up with matter, but mind may consider it apart. Yet the mathematical aspect of reality does not give the final unifying conception of experience. There is another step possible in the ascent of mind. Only in presence of

1.—*Quaedam vero sunt quae excedunt id quod cadit sub sensu, et id quod cadit sub imaginatione; sicut illa quae omnino a materia non dependet neque secundum esse neque secundum considerationem: et ideo talium cognitio secundum iudicium non debet terminari ad imaginationem neque ad sensum.*—*In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 2.

2.—*Est enim proprium objectum intellectus ens intelligibile, quod quidem comprehendit omnes differentias et species enris possibles; quidquid enim esse potest intelligi potest. . . . ex hoc autem quod substantia aliqua est intellectualis, comprehensiva est totius entis.*—*C.G.*, lib. II, cap. XCVIII.

3.—*Metaph.*, lib. IV, lect. 1.

4.—*Naturalia sunt concreta cum materia sensibili et motu secundum esse et secundum considerationem.*—*In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 2.

being does thought find a comprehensive unity. Being is that which surpasses the limits of matter both in reality and for thought; it prescind from change; it goes beyond even substance and accident;¹ it is not merely universal in its objective content; it is transcendental, and passes out beyond the boundaries of the finite to embrace all there is or can be, everything that can have a consistency for thought.²

As long as thought does not rise to this ultimate degree of abstraction it is vain to hope for unity. The modern mind is haunted by the mathematical ideal. Ever since Descartes broached his conception of a New Method, and since science became what M. Boutroux has happily called the "old-time metaphysic",³ unification has been attempted on a lower level than that of being. But that inevitably is to make a particular science supreme, and, on last analysis, to subscribe to the view of one science of nature⁴ with its necessarily mechanical implications. As long as thought is thought it will strive to go beyond the representable, to seek the intelligible content of being as such.⁵

For many, this objective content is something essentially unreal; it has completely evaporated in the very process of abstraction. Whewell has a significant phrase in his

1.—*Quaecumque communiter unius recipiunt praedicationem, licet non univoce, sed analogice de his praedicetur, pertinet ad unius scientiae considerationem: sed ens hoc modo praedicatur de omnibus entibus; ergo omnia entia pertinent ad considerationem unius scientiae, quae considerat ens in quantum ens, scilicet tam substantias quam accidentia.*—*Metaph.*, lib. IV, lect. 1. Cf. *Metaph.*, lib. II, lect. 3; *ibid.*, lib. XII, lect. 1; lib. III, lect. 6 and 4; *Prooem. in Sent.* lib. II, Q. I, art. 4.

2.—*Ostendit autem Philosophus (Metaph. lib. III, text. 10), quod ens non potest esse genus alicujus. Omne enim genus habet differentias, quae sunt extra essentiam generis. Nulla autem differentia potest inveniri quae esset, extra ens; quia non ens non potest esse differentia.*—*Ia.*, Q. III, art. 5 c. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 1 c.; *Sent.* lib. I, dist. 18, Q. IV, art. 2 ad 2; *ibid.*, dist. 35, Q. I, art. 5.

3.—*Science and Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, Eng. Trans., 1909, p. 237.

4.—Cf. J. W. Jenkinson, "Vitalism," *Lectures on the Method and History of Science*, Oxford, 1917; also J. A. Thomson, *Is there One Science of Nature?*—*Hibbert Journal*, October (1911), vol. X.

5.—J. A. Thomson, in his excellent little work, *Introduction to Science*, p. 128, has the significant remark that Science "often strains at its self-made leash."

"Inductive Sciences," where he portrays the metaphysicians exhorting men to consult experience, while they themselves "soon rushed back into their own regions of ideas to seize the widest generalisations".¹ Even Kant himself playfully wrote: 'The light dove cleaving in free flight the thin air, whose resistance it feels, might imagine that it would be much more free and rapid in airless space. It is thus that Plato ventured on the wings of ideas through the empty regions of the pure understanding. He did not perceive that despite all his efforts he made no head-way because he had no fulcrum to which he could apply his forces'.²

The immediate realism of St. Thomas gives the necessary fulcrum for his metaphysical progress.³ Reflecting on experience, in immediate contact with reality, mind arrives at a concept of being which is all-embracing in its transcendental unity. What for Kant himself turned out to be the mere study of the empty forms of the understanding, was for St. Thomas a study of the objective content of being. Thus while Kant, as a necessary consequence, took refuge in agnosticism, St. Thomas found in being an analogical content that extended its application to all possible experience. In effect, what is agnosticism but the crude error that would make of being, in a certain sense, a genus, implying as it does the possibility of kinds of reality with laws entirely other than those known to govern being as such?

For St. Thomas being is that which is more intimate to things than their very nature or essence;⁴ it enjoys a necessary priority for human knowledge, since only in so far as it is, is anything capable of being known.⁵

But that is not the only priority that being enjoys. If we are to grasp the true meaning of progress in metaphysics we

1.—"Inductive Sciences," vol. 2 (1897), p. 204.

2.—Cf. *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (trans. Muller), New York, 1907, Introd. p. 4.

3.—Cf. L. Noël, *Notes d'épistémologie thomiste*, Louvain, 1925, pp. 156-189.

4.—Ipsium enim esse est communissimus effectus, primus et intimior aliis effectibus.—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 7 c.

5.—*Primo autem in conceptione intellectus cadit ens; quia secundum hoc unumquodque cognoscibile est in quantum est actu. Unde ens est proprium objectum intellectus; et sic est primum intelligibile.*—*Ia.*, Q. V, art. 2 c.

have to bear in mind the twofold priority that dominates the whole philosophy of Aquinas. Essentially passive at the outset, the human mind awaits the impulse of experience. It is condemned to rise from humble origins. Sense knowledge and the things that set in motion the process of cognition have therefore a certain priority; a priority *quoad nos*. But once the human mind has functioned, it ascends to the principles of things; it abstracts from the merely individualising characteristics of reality to seize the common unifying principles of experience. And these aspects of reality that disengage themselves from fluctuating experience stand out with a consistency all their own. For mind their being-value is even greater than the individual existences that seem to obtrude themselves with that reality of palpable experience. St. Thomas puts it strikingly: in relation to mind, the universal has a greater being-value than the particular.¹ And hence the universal is said to enjoy priority *quoad se*.

When it is a question of the ultimate abstraction which corresponds to being, this intelligible value is supreme. For being, as St. Thomas points out, enjoys both priorities. Accordingly we are not to confuse being that is given immediately in every apprehension with being as the reflexly formed concept which has a transcendental value for all possible experience. If being is that which first falls under the apprehension of mind, it is also that beyond which intellect cannot go. Indeed the progress of metaphysical reflection is necessarily one of depth, as it were, as opposed to one of extension. We cannot conceive of any positive addition to being. The progress of metaphysics is therefore something quite distinct from that of science; and that will be a

1.—Quantum ad id quod rationis est, universalia magis sunt entia quam particularia.—*Poster. Analytic.*, lib. I, lect. 37. St. Thomas here in a masterly way distinguishes the two orders of knowledge and of existence. It is, we may say, the beginning of true wisdom to bear in mind the twofold priority we have mentioned and constantly to relate it to the twofold order of existence and of knowledge. It will be remarked how delicately St. Thomas vindicates the reality, the ultimate reality of his metaphysical reflection, thereby satisfying the most intransigent idealist, while at the same time not losing sight of the exigencies of experience, when he adds: Quantum vero ad naturalem subsistentiam particularia sunt magis entia.—*Ibid.*

stumbling block for the modern mind so enamoured of new discovery, of new inventions.

None the less, for those who feel the attraction of the ultimate intelligibility of things, metaphysical research inevitably retains its charm. The human mind does not easily forswear its inherent right to seek the unity of things, and is not satisfied among its mechanical models. In its every operation it is in contact with being. But in particular we must distinguish a two-fold operation, one which is occupied with seizing the essence of things, the other which expresses itself in the judgement. In both, says Aquinas, we must recognise something primary and fundamental. On the one hand it is being which is given in every apprehension : no mental operation is possible except in function of being. On the other, the judgement itself is dominated by an ultimate principle. And this principle is that of being, that being is being, and that being cannot be and not be, at the same time.¹

However we view being, therefore, it appears as something essentially real and necessary. Whether we consider the order of existences or of knowledge, being is that which in both orders has supreme value. It is necessarily the "primum aliquod" as Aquinas puts it. In the order of existence it is more intimate to the reality of things than their very nature ; in the order of knowledge it is the ultimate norm for mind.

But for St. Thomas the two orders of existence and of knowledge are not merely parallel ; there is a necessary intersection. On the one hand, the initial passivity of mind requires the action of experience ; on the other, the very

1.—Cum duplex sit operatio intellectus : una, qua cognoscit quod quid est, quae vocatur indivisibilem intelligentia ; alia, qua componit et dividit. In utroque est aliquod primum : in prima quidem operatione est aliquod primum quod cadit in conceptione intellectus, scilicet hoc quod dico ens ; nec aliud hac operatione potest mente concipi, nisi intelligatur ens. Et quia hoc principium, impossibile est esse et non esse simul, dependet ex intellectu entis sicut hoc principium, omne totum est magis sua parte, ex intellectu totius et partis : ideo hoc etiam principium est naturaliter primum in secunda operatione intellectus, scilicet componentis et dividit. — *Metaph.* lib. IV, lect. 6.

character of judgement as affirmation implies necessarily a positing of being.

It is here on the threshold of metaphysical inquiry that Thomism disputes the fundamental principle of idealism. "It is impossible," wrote Fichte, "to get beyond our consciousness. Things are for us in consciousness or they are not. To speak of a thing in itself is like wishing to jump over oneself. . . . Thought could never posit an object except as thought, and even integrally thought, as language itself implies ; nothing could be for Thought 'thing in itself' which would not be 'thing (in itself) for thought' ".¹ In a word, for Fichte being is, because it is thought ; and it is impossible that anything be, without being affirmed. For being, wrote M. L. Brunschvigg, "is function of thought ; if philosophy has for essential object to give a definition of being, it is in thought that we must seek the principle of this definition. To resolve the alternative of the intelligible and the real, it is necessary, therefore, above all to study thought, considered as the function which 'poses' being. In a word, the nature of being is suspended from the nature of the affirmation of being ".²

It is precisely in affirmation that St. Thomas discovers the inevitable character of being. In every judgement there is an affirmation of being ; and affirmation is not a mere luxury for mind. It is a necessity. The most exaggerated scepticism, as an attitude, is implicitly an affirmation. To decline all position is impossible. The "waiting" policy is a policy ; to refuse to affirm is to affirm at least the intention of not affirming. But to affirm is to affirm being. The thought of absolute non-being is the greatest paradox of all, as it implies the affirmation of being twice over.

It is the same for truth. In the very act of denying it I affirm it, by affirming that what I say is true.³ Truth is

1.—A. Valensin, *L'essence de la théorie de la science*, Trad avec notes du. *Sonnenklarer Bericht* de Fichte (Archives de Philosophie, vol. IV, cahier 2), leçon V, p. 79.

2.—*La modalité du jugement*, p. 78.

3.—Veritatem esse est per se notum, quia qui negat veritatem esse, concedit veritatem non esse ; si enim veritas non est, verum est veritatem non esse.—Ia., Q. II, art. 1, obj. 3.

necessarily a reference to being, to reality. This affirmation takes place in consciousness ; it is an *act* of mind. But it is also evident, seeing that such an act is inevitably determined in its content by an objective necessity, that of the relation of truth to being, that its significant content goes beyond the act as such. It is the relation of individual thought to the absolute of being that determines its truth ; it is this relation that dominates the caprice of individual judgement. Being opposes itself to my individual thought. And if it is not known except as "posed," yet ultimately, it is seen, that being imposes itself, and individual thought is true or false according to its relation to the absolute of being.

This necessity of being is really at the basis of Thomistic realism. For St. Thomas the Kantian idea of an appearance which would be mere appearance, and not reality appearing is the merest contradiction. Either appearance is mere appearance, and then we are condemned to dis sever it from the absolute of being, as something entirely subjective,¹ or it is reality appearing, and then there is consistency for our affirmation of being. If appearance is purely subjective and dis severed from being, then the judgement is immediately contradictory, for it affirms and denies being at one and the same time. Being, therefore, is that which dominates ; it evokes the human mind to consciousness ; it presides over mind's every operation ; it traces the ultimate frontier of intelligibility and reality. For being is being, and outside of being there is merely the impossible.

What is more, the view-point of being is fecund. While it unifies experience, it leads ultimately to the true and ultimate unity of things. St. Thomas indicates the way briefly and decisively. No one was more conscious than he of the intimate relation of unity and intelligibility,² and few

1.—Si enim potentia non cognoscit nisi propriam passionem de ea solum judicat. Sic autem videtur aliquid, secundum quod potentia cognoscitiva afficitur. Semper ergo judicium potentiae cognoscitivae erit de eo quod judicat, scilicet de propria passione, secundum quod est ; et ita omne judicium erit verum.—Ia., Q. LXXXV, art. 2.

2.—Unumquodque autem intelligibile est in quantum est unum ; qui enim non intelligit unum, nihil intelligit.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXI, art. 3.

experienced to the same extent the dissatisfaction of mind as long as there is not a complete reduction of the multiple to the one.

It is not sufficient, he writes, to content ourselves with reducing the activities of external things to Nature as their unique principle ; nor does it suffice to reduce, for instance, the purposeful action of man to the principles of reason and will.¹ By so reducing things to Nature and to Mind, we merely demonstrate the necessity of going further ; it is but a partial reduction. Both are reducible to being, and being itself points further. If the different realities of the universe are unified in being, it is necessary that we find the cause of this unity ; for diversity as such cannot *per se* be one. But being is that which is common to all, no matter what their diversity or multiplicity be, hence there must be one unique principle of being, which alone can explain the participation of all things in being. Multiplicity must proceed from the One ; the unity of things is found in God alone.²

It is clear, then, why St. Thomas held that Plato and Aristotle in raising their minds to the concept of being were on the true way to the discovery of the final unity of things. Once the human mind advanced to the metaphysical consideration of being, it felt, we may confidently say, the irresistible need of reducing the multiplicity of being to the

1.—Cum omnis multitudo ab unitate procedat ; quod autem immobile est, uno modo se habet ; quod autem movetur, multiformiter ; considerandum est in tota natura, quod omnis motus ab immobili procedit.—Ia., Q. CXV, art. 3 c. Cum natura propter determinatum finem operetur ex directione alicujus superioris agentis, necesse est ea quae a natura fiunt, etiam in Deum reducere, sicut in primam causam. Similiter etiam quae ex proposito fiunt, oportet reducere in aliquam altiorem causam, quae non sit ratio et voluntas humana ; quia haec mutabilia sunt et defectibilia. Oportet autem omnia mobilia et deficere possibilia reduci in aliquod primum principium immobile et per se necessarium.—Ia., Q. II, art. 3, ad 2.

2.—Oportet enim, si aliquid unum communiter in pluribus invenitur, quod ab aliqua una causa in illis causetur . . . Cum ergo esse inveniatur omnibus rebus commune, quae secundum illud quod sunt, ad invicem distinctae sunt, oportet quod de necessitate eis non ex seipsis conveniat, sed ab aliqua una causa esse attribuat. Et haec est causa quae dicitur primum ens.—*De Pot.* Q. III, art. 5. Si enim diversa in aliquo uniantur, necesse est hujus unionis causam esse aliquam ; non enim diversa secundum se uniantur . . . Hoc autem quod est esse, communiter invenitur in omnibus rebus quantumcumque diversis. Necesse est ergo esse unum essendi principium, a quo esse habeant quaecumque sunt quocumque modo ; sive sint invisibilia et spiritualia, sive sint visibilia et corporalia.—Ia., Q. LXV, art. 1.

One. It felt that the participation in being by a multiplicity of things was not self-explicative. Such things possessed being but they were not being simply; their very multiplicity was possible because there was an inherent distinction of essence and being. Accordingly, the reduction of multiplicity to unity has ever been the common characteristic of the great philosophies of the past, whether it be the reduction of the multiple to the One of a Plotinus, or to the Absolute of Post-Kantian Pantheism, the Pure Act of Aristotle or the God of Aquinas.

(2.) THE RETURN OF BEING TO GOD.

To find the ultimate unity of being in God is to say that all creation is dynamised by a desire of God. Philosophy has instinctively felt so. A return of being to God is of the essence of every metaphysic worthy of the name. Aristotle, despite the embarrassment he experienced in regard to the problem of commencements and the eternity of matter, notwithstanding a certain vagueness in regard to the prime mover, had the genial idea of the world as impelled onwards by desire.¹ Plato had seen the universe ruled by the law of perfection. His psychology was impregnated with the movement of return; the human soul, absent from celestial regions, dreamed in its prison-house of the Sun of intelligences. Plotinus found desire at the very heart of the finite. Neo-Platonism ever retained the tradition of a "circulatio rerum," and saw beneath earthly symbols a flux of things that had its source and term in God.² The rhythm of dialectic is the very soul of Post-Kantian Philosophy.

The metaphysical genius of St. Thomas, we believe, reveals the greatest lucidity in his treatment of this supreme problem of metaphysics. The very metaphysical necessity which for

1.—Cf. Auguste Mansion, *Introduction à la physique aristotélicienne*, Louvain, 1913, p. 200.

2.—*Cadit Hesperias Phoebus in undas; Sed secreto tramite rursus Currum solitos vertit ad ortus.*—Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiae*, lib. III, sect. 4. *Hanc rerum seriem ligat Terras, ac pelagus regens, Et coelo imperitans amor.*—*Ibid.*, lib. II, sect. 16.

him linked up the finite with God as efficient cause of all being, marked also the necessity of a return of being to its source. For God is final end of all being by the very necessity with which He is efficient cause of all creation. It is impossible, he says, to know the First Cause without thereby knowing the Final End.¹

The finite, insufficient of itself to arrest the progress of thought, points inevitably to God for the intelligibility of its being. As being, the finite is essentially imperfect; it is excluded from the perfection of being by its very distinction of essence and existence. Yet, as a participation in being, it implies necessarily an elementary perfection, and claims for its intelligibility the possibility of progress. The finite is properly that which is composed of potency and act; it is that which, in regard to the Being who is Absolute Perfection, is "in potency." It has not within itself the reason of its being, nor of its activity; it tends beyond itself to God. Just as we must seek the reason of its being outside it, so for the intelligibility of its becoming we must look to God. Without Him no progress is possible; no addition to being is intelligible that does not suppose Him; and no advance in perfection is possible that does not tend towards Him.

God, as source of all there is or can be, alone renders intelligible the ultimate unity of multiplicity. The multiple of creation is rationalised only in function of the One, God. For St. Thomas, the only link that can connect up the diversity of creation with God is that of transcendental causality. For him, God is not the *materia prima*, the one being, of which multiplicity is but the outer phenomenon.² Neither is He the form that unites immediately with the finite; nor yet is His the one unique subsistence that upholds all being.³

1.—Cum finis respondeat principio, non potest fieri ut, principio cognito, quis sit rerum finis ignoretur.—Ia., Q. CIII, art. 2 c.

2.—Ia., Q. V, art. 8.

3.—The suggestive article of P. Aug. Valensin, S.J., on Pantheism deserves citation for the manner in which he utilises the Christian truth of the Incarnation to clarify the thought of pantheists themselves. Cf. *A travers la métaphysique*, 1925, pp. 81-135.

God is transcendent. He is Pure Act. He is being identical with itself in the fullness of all perfection. The finite as a mere participation in being is in a position of total dependence in His regard. It is this total dependence that characterises the finite most intimately. This dependence in regard to God is immediate: St. Thomas denied to the finite the possibility of creation.¹ It is permanent: the conservation of the finite in being is but the prolongation of the creative act.² It enters into the very definition of the finite; the finite as being is but the term of the relation that the creative act sets up between it and God.³

It is this very relation to the Unity of God that alone adequately renders intelligible the diversity and multiplicity of things. It is this causal link that gives unity to being. Within being there is ever the fundamental dichotomy of being that is identically being and being that merely participates in being.⁴ But within being there is no chasmed isolation. God is not to be absolutely opposed to creation; the total dependence of the finite on Him requires an intimacy that is ineffable. This relation of the finite to God establishes a bond of sympathy throughout all creation; it prevents the finite from being an absolute in miniature, and turns it to the real Absolute for the intelligibility of its being and of its action. There is a fundamental metaphysical sameness about the finite in regard to God; in that which is

1.—*Creare non potest esse propria actio nisi solius Dei.*—Ia., Q. XLV, art. 5.

2.—*Dependet enim esse cujuslibet creaturæ a Deo, ita quod nec ad momentum subsistere possent, sed in nihilum redigerentur, nisi operatione divinæ virtutis conservarentur in esse.*—Ia., Q. CIV, art. 1 c.

3.—This relation being one of total dependence of the finite in regard to God is well expressed, and with the necessary precision, by St. Thomas as follows: *Illā relatio accidens est, et secundum esse suum considerata, prout inhaeret subjecto, posterius est quam res creata sicut accidens subjecto intellectu et natura posterius est; quamvis non sit talis accidens quod causetur ex principiis subjecti. Si vero consideretur secundum suam rationem prout ex actione agentis innascitur prædicta relatio sic est quodam modo prior subjecto, quæ sicut ipsa divina actio est ejus causa proxima.*—*De Potentia*, Q. III, art. 3, ad 3. Cf. *ibid.*, art. 5, ad 1; Ia., Q. XLIV, art. 1, ad 1.

4.—*Solus Deus est ens per essentiam suam, quia ejus essentia est suum esse; omnis autem creatura est ens participative, non quod sua essentia sit ejus esse.*—Ia., Q. CIV, art. 1 c.

most intimate to it, its very being, the finite is just the term of a relation that mounts up to God.

These very relations that mount up from the creature to God do not descend from Him to the creature. And this already gives an image of the convergence of multiplicity to the One. There is no real relation on the part of God in regard to the finite; the whole creation is to be conceived as directed towards Him. He is the focus towards which all things tend; He is the centre around which all created being turns. Between Him and creation there is strictly speaking no common measure, for that would be to make of being something univocal. The intrinsic relation to being which characterises the finite as being is one of total dependence in regard to God. It is this which avoids the twofold absurdity of being as purely univocal or purely equivocal, and gives the ultimate basis for the analogy of being, as well as for the ultimate unity of diversity.

It is only, therefore, the affirmation of God as the ultimate metaphysical unity, which can explain the multiplicity of substances that are to be found in being. That which is one in God, says St. Thomas, is multiple outside of Him.¹ For the metaphysician the task arises of showing how such a diversity is possible within being. He does so in virtue of the real distinction of essence and existence which he finds in the finite as such. It is that which is implied in the Thomistic view of participation. The divine nature is diversely imitable. God knows the possible modes of such participation; and if He has spread around Him the rays of His goodness it is because no finite being could adequately represent of itself the divine perfection.²

1.—Sed quia perfectum hominis bonum est ut quoquo modo Deum cognoscat . . . datur homini quaedam via . . . Et, quia in summo rerum vertice Deo, perfectissima unitas invenitur, et unumquodque, quanto est magis unum, tanto est magis virtuosum et dignius, consequens est ut quantum a primo principio receditur, tanto major diversitas et variatio invenitur. Oportet igitur processum emanationis a Deo uniri quidem in ipso principio, multiplicari autem secundum res infimas.—C.G., lib. IV, C. 1.

2.—Produxit enim res in esse propter suam bonitatem communicandam creaturis, et per eas repraesentandam. Et quia per unam creaturam sufficienter repraesentari non potest, produxit multas creaturas et diversas, ut

This immediate descent of being to its inferiors is carried further, when the metaphysician undertakes to explain the possibility of a multiplicity within the same species. And then for him

. the hierarchical
Vision lies unoccult, rank under rank
Through all-create-down-wheeling, from the Throne
Even to the bases of the pregnant ooze.¹

But the task for metaphysics is not thereby completed. The metaphysician must retrace his steps. Because He who is the principle and cause of being is necessarily the final end of all, the ascent of being, the return of multiplicity to unity, must be rendered intelligible. All things must be reduced to their metaphysical unity; they have come from God; they seek Him. The whole universe is unified in this common search.² St Thomas compares the world now to an army, now to a single kingdom with a unique ruler.³

The insufficiency of the finite points beyond itself. The universe has not within it the reason of its being, nor the "motif" of its action. Its metaphysical unity lies beyond it. It has come from unity; it is in search of unity; and it is because it seeks God that there is harmony and order. The unity of direction ensures the harmony of all. Now because this tendency is just the metaphysical meaning of desire, it is not difficult to see what an interest for philosophy, which is a search for unity, the Thomistic view of the desire of God may have. In truth, it is just the very life of metaphysical thought that is implied in such a question, for metaphysics is necessarily an attempt to seize the being of

quod deest uni ad repraesentandam divinam bonitatem, suppleatur ex alia.—Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 1. Cf. *De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 2. *In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. IV, art. 1.

1.—Francis Thompson, *Anthem of Earth*, Works, vol. II.

2.—Quaecumque sunt a Deo, ordinem habent ad invicem et ad ipsum Deum.—Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 3.

3.—Unde relinquitur quod totum universum est sicut unus principatus et unum regnum. Et ita oportet quod ordinetur ab uno gubernatore. Et hoc est quod concludit (Aristoteles), quod est unus princeps totius universi scilicet primum movens et primum intelligibile et primum bonum, quod supra dixit Deum, qui est benedictus in saecula saeculorum.—Concluding words of his commentary on the *Metaph.* of Arist., lib. XII, lect. 12, end.

things in their palpitating *élan* to the Infinite; it is an attempt to discover the hidden sympathy of multiplicity for unity; to consider fragmentary reality in the intelligible unity of being, and ultimately in the divine perspective; in a word, it is the consistent effort, not only to mark the origin in being of multiplicity, but the final possible return of diversity to unity, of the finite to God.

It is the unexplored grandeur of the Thomistic theory of matter and form that renders metaphysically intelligible the commencement of this return of being to God. For Aquinas the term of the creative act is at once the composite of matter and form. Furthest removed from God, on the outskirts of the wide circle of being, bordering on very nothingness, matter, in the Thomistic conception, is vivified, as it were, by idea; it has already the promise and guarantee of its necessary intelligibility and of its true orientation.

It is here that the human mind becomes a necessary moment in the return of things, inserting itself in the hierarchy of being as mediator between the material and the spiritual. In the *De Spiritualibus Creaturis*¹ St. Thomas remarks that it was impossible for mere corporeal substance to be gathered, as it were, immediately beneath God; many *media*, he says, were necessary. If we wish to ascertain what such *media* signify in the Saint's mind, we have but to open the first article of the *De Veritate*,² where he gives a wonderful epitome of being and of its transcendental exigencies. If being is transcendental, and if it implies as well a possible relation to perfectibility and to truth, it is necessary, he writes, that there be something co-extensive with being. For this purpose it is essential that there be something destined to be co-ordinate with being as such. This something is the soul with its twofold faculty of intellect and will: *anima est quodammodo omnia*.

1.—Non ideo possibile est quod immediate sub Deo collocatur corporalia substantia, sed oportet ponere media multa.—Q. I., art. 5.

2.—Si autem modus entis accipitur secundo modo, scilicet secundum ordinem unius ad alterum; hoc potest esse dupliciter. Uno modo secundum divisionem unius ab altero . . . Alio modo secundum convenientiam unius entis ad aliud; et hoc quidem non potest esse nisi accipiat aliquid quod natum sit convenire cum omni ente. Hoc autem est anima, quæ quodammodo est omnia.—*De Verit.*, Q. I., art. 1.

When it is a question of matter and of the purely sensible order we cannot speak of an immediate reduction to God ; mind must intervene. The material creation as such is neither immediately nor actually intelligible. It is impossible that the divine being should obtain the glory that is necessarily His from something that is potential in so far as it is potential. Nature calls for its complement, Mind. And thus the human spirit becomes a necessary moment in the ascent to God. Man is Nature's pontiff whose rôle is to lift up the inert voice of things, to express their *élan* to God.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIVINE SCIENCE.

THE human mind is a curious combination of debility and audacity. Condemned to rise from humble origins,¹ its ambition is directed towards a final unity of things. That it discovers this final unity in God is at once significant. It reveals the aspiration of the human mind to see all things in the divine perspective.²

When Aristotle designated this search on the part of mind for unity as divine he found a title for metaphysics which, if it is not entirely appropriate,³ yet is a singularly happy one.⁴ For metaphysical reflection is properly divine in so far as all

1.—In qualibet cognitione duo est considerare, scilicet principium et finem, sive terminum. Principium ad apprehensionem pertinet, terminus autem ad iudicium: ibi enim cognitio perficitur. *Principium igitur cuiuslibet nostrae cognitionis est in sensu.*—In *Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 2.

2.—R. P. Weber, in a remarkably lucid *Essai de métaphysique thomiste* (*Revue des Jeunes*), Paris, p. 98, has the striking phrase: "L'homme qui veut voir comme Dieu, tel est l'audacieux idéal du métaphysicien."

3.—In this sense that it merely indicates the *a potiori* object of Metaphysics. Even for Aristotle God was not the exclusive object of Metaphysics. Its proper object is being as such. And being as such is not to be confounded with God.—Cf. *Rev. néo-scol.*, XXVI (1924), pp. 353 and 366, where M. A. Mansion points out the error of Léon Robin, *La pensée grecque et les origines de l'esprit scientifique*; and of Charles Lalo, *Aristote* (Collection Les Philosophes), who confound being as such in Aristotle with God as the First Being. For an interesting account of the evolution of the metaphysical thought of Aristotle see M. Mansion's able article: *La genèse de l'oeuvre d' Aristote*—*Rev. néo-scol.*, XXIX (1927), pp. 307-341, where the works of W. Jaeger, particularly his recent book, *Aristoteles, Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung*, Berlin, 1923, are appreciated, and certain valuable emendations suggested as to his conclusions.

4.—Metaphysics I. 2 (983 a5). In this sense metaphysics, as the divine science, is to be distinguished from theology in its supernatural setting. When Cousin, Picavet and others emphasised the ancillary rôle of philosophy in the middle ages they seem to have overlooked the fact that a natural theology was possible. Strictly speaking, wrote Cousin, "there is no philosophy in Scholasticism, for philosophy is therein condemned to be merely a means, a simple form of theology,"—*Cours de philosophie*, tome II (1840), pp. 2, 21. Aristotle, who can scarcely be accused of partiality for the supernatural as revealed in Christianity, also spoke of the ancillary rôle of the sciences in regard to metaphysics. And in his day Albert the Great wrote: *Dicunt omnes philosophi* (hence pagan as well as Christian) *quod theologia est finis omnium scientiarum, quae in omni scibili intenditur prima et per omne scibile accipitur ultima . . . Haec igitur scientia finis aliarum scientiarum est, ad*

its efforts are directed to God as the final unity, the ultimate cause of all.¹

Though a certain proficiency, a certain greater facility, may beguile the mind of man to closer study of the things of earth, yet it is man's nobility to lift his gaze to the source of all intelligibility, and to find in the consideration of being as such a certain savour of divinity.² It is only when humanity thus sets out in search of ultimates that it is on the true road to wisdom.³

It is but natural that such a science enjoys preeminence. Its abstraction is deepest, its object is the most intelligible in itself and farthest removed from sense ; it enjoys a certain immobility which is a sign of perfection. There is an amplitude about the final end that surpasses the reach of particular sciences ;⁴ there is an autonomy about its principles

quem omnes aliae referuntur ut ancillae." See Alfred O'Rahilly, Ph.D., *The Criterion of Catholic Philosophy—Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, vol. V (1915), pp. 17-29. A typical instance of this confusion of the two theologies may be seen in the article, *Métaphysique*, *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* : "Saint Thomas considère la métaphysique comme la science de tout ce qui manifeste le surnaturel : il appelle transphysica les objets de cette science. Ce surnaturel est entendu par lui au sens chrétien." Need it be remarked that the "transphysica" of St. Thomas, any more than of Aristotle, are not necessarily supernatural in the Christian sense? The Zybura-Research, *Present Day Thinkers and the New Scholasticism*, Herder, 1926, reveals to what extent the same confusion of philosophy and theology is laid at the door of scholastics. The classical sources on this matter are well known. The reader will find ample treatment of it in M. De Wulf's *History of Mediaeval Philosophy*, Eng. trans. by E. C. Messenger, Ph.D., Longmans, 1926. Cf. also M. E. Gilson's *Etudes de philosophie moderne*, particularly his suggestive chapter, entitled, *Le réformateur Albertino-Thomiste*, pp. 95 sqq. ; M. Grabmann, *Die Kulturphilosophie des hl. Thomas*, Augsburg, 1925.

1.—Ipsaque prima Philosophia tota ordinatur ad Dei cognitionem, sicut ad ultimum finem ; unde scientia divina nominatur.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

2.—Intellectus autem humanus magis desiderat et amat et delectatur in cognitione divinorum, quamvis modicum quidem de illis percipere possit, quam in perfecta cognitione quam habet de rebus infimis.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

3.—Homo autem secundum diversa cognita habet diversas cognitiones. Nam secundum quod cognoscit principia, dicitur habere intelligentiam ; scientiam vero secundum quod cognoscit conclusiones ; sapientiam secundum quod cognoscit altissimam causam.—Ia., Q. XIV, art. 1, ad 2.

4.—Sapientis est ordinare. Omnium autem gubernandorum et ordinandorum ad finem, gubernationis et ordinis regulam ex fine sumi necesse est. Tunc enim unaquaeque res optime disponitur, quum ad suum finem convenienter ordinatur. . . . Nomen autem simpliciter sapientis illi soli reservatur, cujus consideratio circa finem universi versatur, qui etiam est universitatis principium.—C.G., lib. I, cap. I. Cf. *Sent.*, lib. III, dist. 35, Q. I, 2, sols. 2, 5 ; *Ibid.*, Q. II, art. 2, sol. 3 ; *Ibid.*, Q. II, art. 1, sol. 1.

that other sciences do not possess; there is a certitude in its knowledge which surpasses that of all other natural science.¹ In a word, the metaphysician enjoys an eminence whence he may review both being and knowledge; he may, indeed, prove to be the defender of both, for he sees in true perspective, wherein all is seen ultimately to be intelligible.²

(1.) UNITY FOR MIND.

For the human mind there is inevitably a twofold viewpoint, that of being and that of knowledge. At the human level reality appears as something over against the knowing subject. There is a characteristic subject-object relation. As being descends from God there is a necessary bifurcation.

This twofold aspect, however, is not to be overstressed. Once we have discovered the ultimate unity of things in God, we are in presence of an identity of being and knowledge. Far from being a characteristic of knowledge as such, the subject-object relation arises from the imperfection that characterises human knowledge. Man is destined to gain himself by commerce with a reality which is distinct from him. Essentially imperfect at the outset, the human mind must realise itself by successive actuations. It multiplies its concepts and its judgments; it has recourse to reasoning; it seeks to reduce multiplicity to unity; it hopes to obtain from the unity of reality the unity of its own forces.³ Were it more comprehensive, did it possess a certain intuition of being, or of itself, it might at least hope for a certain vague vision of multiplicity in unity. As it is, in its imperfection it

1.—Ita illa quae est simpliciter est certissima inter omnes scientias.—*Ethic.*, lib. VI, lect. 5.

2.—Est enim sapientia caput omnium scientiarum regulans omnes alias, in quantum de altissimis principiis est: propter quod etiam *dea scientiarum* dicitur.—*In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. II, art. 2, ad. 1. Cf. C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

3.—Unumquodque sicut custodit suum esse, ita custodit suam unitatem.—*Ia.*, Q. XI, art. 1.

is destined to that laborious search for unity that characterises all human attempts at philosophical reflection.

But to return and view the cheerful skies
In this the task and mighty labour lies.

In God being is perfectly identical with itself. He sees immediately the multiple in the one.¹ In Him there is no opposition of subject and object: there is nothing opaque. He is "Thought of Thought." Even the angel has a certain intuition of its essence whereby it knows its position in the harmonised multiplicity of being. But man is precisely the being that is characterised by the absence of such intuition. Since being is the adequate object of all intelligence, the position of mind in the hierarchy of perfection is determined by its relation to being.² It is because God is identically being that He beholds in His essence everything that has being whether actual or possible. The human mind, however, is last in the order of intelligences and in the beginning is characterised by passivity.

All that St. Thomas would grant to the human mind in its primitive state is the a priori power of modifying itself under the influence from without. The hypothesis of innate ideas he excludes. For him ideas are not like pearls dropped by an Almighty Hand into the depths of the soul, as has been poetically imagined by some philosophers. Any kind of higher intuition of God is alien to his system. This is all the more remarkable when we realise that St. Thomas found

1.—*In Deo autem tota plenitudo intellectualis cognitionis continetur in uno; scilicet in essentia divina, per quam Deus omnia cognoscit. Quae quidem intelligibilis plenitudo in intelligibilibus creaturis inferiori modo et minus simpliciter invenitur. Unde oportet quod ea quae Deus cognoscit per unum, inferiores intellectus cognoscant per multa; et tanto amplius per plura quanto amplius intellectus inferior fuerit.*—Ia., Q. LV, art. 3.

2.—*Intellectus enim habet operationem circa ens in universali. Considerari ergo potest utrum intellectus sit in actu, vel in potentia, ex hoc quod consideratur quomodo se habeat ad ens universale. Invenitur enim aliquis intellectus qui ad ens universale se habet sicut actus totius entis, et talis est intellectus divinus, qui est Dei essentia, in qua originaliter et virtualiter totum ens praeexistit sicut in prima causa. . . . Nullus intellectus creatus potest se habere ut actus respectu totius entis universalis. . . . Intellectus humanus qui est infimus. . . . est in potentia respectu intelligibilium; et in principio est sicut "tabula rasa" in qua nihil est scriptum.*—Ia., Q. LXXIX, art. 2.

himself face to face with a long tradition, which had preceded him. Ever since Plato had spoken of the Sun of the good, a doctrine of divine illumination had passed down the ages. In particular St. Augustine had adopted it, and Augustinianism constituted a block of doctrine bequeathed to the middle ages. On this point there can be little doubt as to St. Thomas's attitude.¹ His doctrine is new; the great original fact of the thirteenth century is his assimilation of Aristotle and the formation of his own synthesis; illumination has been replaced by the natural faculties themselves; the light that hitherto streamed from the Throne of God is crystallised and concentrated in the faculty of intelligence itself, the faculty of being and first principles.

It is not difficult to surmise what would have been his attitude to the doctrine of Ontologism, and to all forms of a direct vision of God in this life. As regards such doctrines as appeal to some mysterious sense of the divine, superior to intellect or will, he would no doubt have shown himself very exacting. For him there are but two faculties of the transcendental, intellect and will, and they are destined to realise the soul's perfection, so far as that is possible, by a prolonged commerce with the real, which they cannot give themselves, but which is given. And as things are distant from their divine source the unity of perfection is dispersed in many rays, it is the high privilege of the human mind to attempt to lead back these scattered rays to their original unity.

If this reduction to unity has an importance for reality, to show how all that has being is ultimately related to a

1.—M. Grabmann writes "One needs but to compare the *Summa* of Ulrich of Strasburg, the most loyal follower of Albert, with the *Summa Theologiae* of Aquinas in order to notice at once that St. Thomas did not stop at the views of his teacher, but constructed and rounded off his Christian Aristotelianism by further independent effort." See *Zyburu-Research*, p. 150-151. That this novelty consisted in great part in the formation of a Christian philosophy on an Aristotelian basis is generally admitted. Cf. Cardinal Ehrle—*L'Agostinismo et l'Aristotelismo* . . . *Ulteriori Discussioni e Materiali* in *Xenia Thomistica*, 3 (1925), 517-588. Cf. E. Gilson *op. cit.*, also *Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin*.—*Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge.*, Année 1926-1927, p. 5-127; and same author's work, *Le thomisme*, 3 ed., Paris, 1927, chap. 9.

divine thought, it has also an importance for mind itself. Metaphysics, having for object the final end, the ultimate unity, the good of the entire universe,¹ we may surmise its relation to man; it marks the object that ultimately must unify his forces and render intelligible that instinctive search for the unity of being.

For this reason it is that the search for unity is so characteristically human. For this reason also it is that St. Thomas considers metaphysics an affair of intelligence. He distinguishes mind according as it is the faculty of principles and of a certain contemplation and according as it is the source of reasoning. As the faculty of principles he calls it intelligence, and as engaged in the process of reasoning he designates it 'ratio' or reason.² But all the processes of mind are directed towards a certain unity. The very fragmentary views that it is forced to take is towards the one end, the vision of multiplicity in unity, and as mind is more synthetic and powerful the greater will be its power of concentrating in a synthetic view the multiplicity of experience. The very process of reason is, therefore, in function of unity and directed towards a certain contemplation.

For the metaphysician who has discovered the unity of being in God there is a certain contemplation of the multiplicity of being in function of unity. Already the opposition of mind as source of reasoning and of contemplation is seen to disappear. St. Thomas, who described the joys of philosophic contemplation in glowing terms, was not less conscious than any modern votary of Intuitionism of the aspiration of the human mind towards unity, only he was more conscious than they of the human mind's infirmity. The necessary recourse to reasoning as to the fragmentary view of things by concepts, he did not exalt, but simply recognised in it a necessary defect that belonged to mind in

1.—*Ethic.*, lib. I, lect. 2; *Metaph.*, lib. II, lect. 7; *Metaph.*, lib. VI, lect. 1.

2.—Intellectus simplicem et absolutam cognitionem designare videtur . . . ratio vero discursum quemdam designat quo ex uno in aliud co noscendum anima pertingit vel pervenit. —*De Verit.*, Q. XV, art. 1.

its present state, but not to intelligence as such. In the contemplation of the universe as coming from the hands of God, mind is like the weary wayfarer who is glad to see from some high eminence the undulating plains beneath and the rugged path he has ascended.

Once the human mind has found in God the ultimate metaphysical unity it is in a position to see that all there is or can be is necessarily related to the divine Mind, and hence is necessarily intelligible. The very process of abstraction, the multiplication of its concepts and reasonings, is seen not only to have its *raison d'être* in its own imperfection, but the material individual, so strikingly opaque for human thought, is seen to be intelligible in the divine perspective.

If the process of abstraction is a necessity, it is because the material individual is not immediately intelligible for the human mind. It is just the special characteristic of knowledge that it permits the knowing subject to possess the forms of other things. While remaining itself it may become the other, and this prerogative it possesses in virtue of its immateriality. It is that which allows of its expansiveness. That which is merely material is isolated in itself. Matter is that precisely which opposes itself to knowledge. And no doubt it is this consideration that is at the source of the modern idealistic trend of thought, which would make the advance of philosophy synonomous with the rejection of the thing in itself. St. Thomas is idealistic in this sense that, for him also, knowledge is possible only in virtue of a certain independence of matter, and because of a form or perfection which is not riveted to matter, but which rises up triumphant over it with horizons illimitable.

The human soul, in virtue of its original passivity, is not only absent from an intellectual intuition of being but from itself. Ontologically, it is present to itself, but this ontological presence is not given as an actual substantial intuition. It is as if the body prevented the immediate presence of soul to itself. However we explain it, the fact remains that initially the human soul is surrounded, as it were, by a mere potential intelligibility. Only in so far as it has been actualised is it capable of knowing the world or itself.

Knowledge is possible only in so far as the object is somehow in the knower. But in the case of the human mind it is impossible that the material individual as such be the immediate means of knowledge. It cannot as such be the *medium quo*. St. Thomas was too conscious of the organic unity of sense and intellect to think of such an hypothesis of a pure intellect. For him reality is present immediately to the knowing subject who is at once a composite of sense and intellect. By means of a form, species, or idea, intellect, working on the given of sense, enters into more intimate contact with the real. This species is employed by St. Thomas as an ontological explanation of the process of knowledge. It is not for him the direct object known, it is rather the means by which (*medium quo*) mind renders actually intelligible the potential intelligibility of the known. In so far as this presupposes on the part of intellect a certain activity, such activity for St. Thomas would be rather re-constructive than constructive simply speaking. While he does not deify the concept, neither does he disdain it, for it gives a true, though inadequate, knowledge of the individual.

Possibly it will be objected that on such a view there is necessarily a tendency "to separate between the ideal of science and the concrete thing." In reality, as we have seen, the individual is necessarily intelligible in the divine perspective. Where the modern idealist represents the individual as irremediably excluded from all intelligibility, St. Thomas has safeguarded the individual by his view of an ultimate unity. He thus saved the individual for knowledge and did not allow it to become the hypothetical "X" of Kant or the "unknowable" of Spencer.

(2.) INTELLECTUAL DYNAMISM.

The more we reflect on the Thomistic account of knowledge the more we realise the intermediary position which he assigns to the human mind in the hierarchy of things. As last of intellectual beings and first of beings united to matter, the human mind is properly not only intermediary but a mediator. It is as we have said mediator between matter and God. And this position of the human mind St. Thomas understood in function of the combination of infirmity and audacity.

The great arc of being from God down to the last atom of matter is taut before it. It is held triumphantly between the two. The absolutely indetermined, pure matter, it cannot positively think, and in this St. Thomas is at one with the idealist. Hence for him matter is knowable only in so far as it is determined by form. Of matter as such it has no positive knowledge. Only in so far as a thing is in act is it knowable, and matter as the absolutely indetermined is impossible of realisation in the order of being.

On the other hand, the finite mind has not a positive concept of God. For God it knows only in function of creation and He is infinitely distant in perfection from that which mere finite effects can reveal as to His real essence. How could the finite as such express the perfection of the infinite in act? How could the finite mind of itself hope to encompass within its poor concepts the infinite essence of God? The final word of wisdom is that God, in that which specifically constitutes His essence, necessarily eludes the grasp of finite mind.

There is thus a certain analogy between God and matter in the Thomistic system. They are at the antipodes of perfection. God is Pure Act absolutely determined in Himself; matter is pure potency, as such incapable of existence, never more itself than when not itself, absolutely indeterminate. In regard to human knowledge the analogy loses none of its significance. For, while matter is unknowable except determined by form, God is unknowable except by means of creation. Matter is impervious to reason

because as such it is unintelligible; God is beyond reason because He is intelligibility itself.

But it is when we consider the human mind in its most intimate nature that this analogy becomes most striking. We shall see on the part of mind a certain dynamism which reveals a tendency that is infinite. If matter as such, impossible as to its realisation, is infinitely distant from any immediate knowledge of it by the human mind, so God as Truth itself will be seen to be infinitely beyond the human mind so far as an immediate vision of Him is considered. Without raising the question whether this is the only way mind has of attaining either God or matter¹ we may at least see how the desire that is at the heart of the finite finds expression in the rational creature.

At the source of this analogy there is the Thomistic view of the twofold aspect of the human mind. If the human mind is passive at the beginning, yet it is not in the state of that crude passivity that is characteristic of matter. There is that in human knowledge which a crude empiricism fails to note, and which an intrepid idealism exaggerates. Mind is neither purely passive nor purely active. It does not passively accept impressions from without. Newman once spoke of an intellectual daguerreotype, and many have thought of the Scholastic view of knowledge as a transcript or copy-theory.² The truth is otherwise. Knowledge as such is no mere copy. The mental process involved in a judgement is something unique and in no way a mere copy of reality.³ It is properly a lifting up of material things to the life of the subject and a rendering actually intelligible what in surrounding reality is merely potentially so.

1.—For a remarkable exposition of this view the reader may consult J. Maréchal, S.J., *Le point de départ de la métaphysique*, Cahier V, pp. 184 sqq. Louvain, Paris, 1926.

2.—Prof. James, it is well known, vigorously attacked the "Transcript theory of knowledge." Peculiarly enough he thought he was refuting some form of the Scholastic theory. See *Humanism and Truth*, Mind, XIII, 1904, p. 477; *The Meaning of Truth*, London, 1909, pp. 78 sqq.

3.—Cf. Rev. D. O'Keeffe's interesting articles on Pragmatism.—*Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, XXXI (1912), pp. 561-569.

St. Thomas was never tempted by a purely empirical origin of the categories. For him mind was no mere excrescence on a world of matter, and it is not difficult to mark the inevitable *petitio principii* of pure empiricism, which would explain the origin of the categories by the categories themselves.

On the other hand, he would not have entertained the idea of a dialectical deduction from indeterminate being of the whole universe down to its last detail. If Hegel did pretend so to deduce experience from being, it was surely because he had surreptitiously, unconsciously perhaps, introduced the knowledge which experience had given him. Without the cue from experience it was quite impossible to arrive at such a result. Theoretically, it was quite impossible to set out. The appeal in the antithesis, if it implies recourse to absolute non-being, is absurd. For absolute non-being is unthinkable, and mind is necessarily limited to being. When Hegel goes on to argue that being in as much as it is an absolute abstraction is identical with nothing it is evident that there is an equivocal play on the word being. The being which he affirms in the thesis is being in the abstract, but the being which he denies in the antithesis is necessarily determinate being. It is yet to be proved that being in the abstract is absolutely indeterminate. And it is impossible to do so, for being is just that which is quite opposed to the absolutely indeterminate which is the impossible.

There is no deduction from being in Hegel's sense. When the descent of being to its inferiors is spoken of as "immediate," it is intended to convey that nothing completely *ab extrinseco* can be added to being. The deduction of being which we meet in St. Thomas is rather a reduction of things to being and the necessary; deduction for him means discovering a necessary value in function of being for the different principles that appear in his metaphysics.

This arises because being is an ultimate abstraction. It is only when in the process of reflection we commence to separate being from that in which it is given, from sense and phantasm,

that we grasp its significance. We realise that being is something essentially non-representable, that its significance is not that of the ordinary universal concept, but is transcendental. Once we have thus left the concrete fact and passing moment to consider being in its transcendental application, it is clear that, while remaining on the metaphysical plane, we cannot hope to retain what mind in its progress has already left behind it.

True, on final analysis the significance of being derives from the act of existence, and in moments of unreflective conscious life it is given directly, and spontaneously we affirm being of surrounding objects. But it is only on reflection that we realise the significance of our spontaneous affirmations. If we affirm being of experience spontaneously, and if all our affirmations have a reference to being, we thereby affirm that experience is intelligible, capable of being reduced to a thought-formula. But we need to remark that the very experience, under the urge of which our affirmation has been called forth, contrasts strangely with the far-reaching concept of being which is given therein. Our judgement necessarily transcends the passing moment; we proclaim experience to be a participation of being as such, which is something eminently intelligible; the passing aspect of experience contrasts with the immobility of being; and if the individual is present to mind as being, it is not present immediately as individual.

Once we have thus transcended the passing moment in the abstract concept of being, it is futile to hope to regain it as long as we remain on the metaphysical plane. The abstract and necessary concept of being cannot be stretched "along the whole front of empirical being." It considers experience merely in its necessary aspects. To consider contingent facts as being is to seek in them a necessary aspect, and at the same time to relinquish the hope of rejoining them in their contingent changing character. It is to consider the actual as possible, for while the world, as actual, depends on the free Will of God, as possible it is necessarily so with the

necessity of God Himself.¹

Evidently, therefore, a deduction of being for St. Thomas has not at all the same meaning that it has for Hegel. A choice imposes itself necessarily on the human mind. Having found an aspect of experience where contingency becomes a necessary contingency, we must relinquish the hope of knowing contingency as such in its actual concrete mutable setting, that is, as long as we remain on the metaphysical plane. There can be no question for the human mind of deducing the world from the pure concept of being. We cannot legislate for the actual, all we can hope to see is the broad conditions that the actual must satisfy for its intelligibility.

By discovering the unity of being in God metaphysics discovers this minimum that it required. But what is striking about the view of St. Thomas is that before mind has explicitly discovered this ultimate unity, it has been implicitly affirming its existence. In every judgment it affirms it, for it affirms being, the absolute of being, the identity of being with itself; it affirms experience as intelligible and that somewhere it is "intellected"; implicitly it affirms God.

St. Thomas gives a perfect poise for the two aspects of the human mind. In this implicit affirmation of God human knowledge consoles itself, as it were, for its humble origins. If it is obliged to have recourse to abstraction, if the material individual is not immediately intelligible for it, yet it affirms the ultimate intelligibility of the individual as a participation in being. Where Aristotle hesitated, St. Thomas is certain; and where the material individual is a stumbling block for idealism, it is avoided by St. Thomas, who found the ultimate metaphysical unity of being in God.

While idealism, rejecting matter, makes the universe rational through and through, and is confronted with the

1.—"La métaphysique a pour objet formel l'être en tant que tel. Elle n'atteint donc pas l'être fini en tant qu'actuellement existant, mais uniquement en tant que pouvant être. Le métaphysicien sait que Dieu doit exister, même si di fait le monde n'existait pas." M. N. Balthasar, *Le panthéisme spinoziste*.—*Rev. néo-scol.*, XXVIII (1926), p. 466.

exigencies of experience, St. Thomas can at once hold an ultimate unity, and an actual multiplicity. Seeing in mind the truth of nature, as Hegel put it, idealism is not sufficiently conscious of the abyss that separates the finite and the infinite. To hope that through the human mind the absolute of being and intelligibility will be realised—and that is the thought that is immanent in the great systems of Post-Kantian Idealism—is singularly to overlook the nature of the human mind.

St. Thomas is at once more modest without forsaking any of mind's inherent rights. For him the human mind knows that such an ultimate unity exists, and implicitly affirms, in all its judgments, that there is an ultimate view-point from which all is intelligible. But he does not go so far as to say that such an ideal of philosophy is humanly realisable; nay more, he would affirm that the absolute identity of thought and reality as a final metaphysical unity is not only utopian, where finite mind is concerned, but a metaphysical impossibility.

Where the system of St. Thomas has its greatest value is that it recognises the truth that is at the source of such efforts of human thought towards an ultimate metaphysical unity. It derives from the manner in which he viewed the two-fold aspect of the human mind, its debility and its ambition. The very affirmation of an ultimate unity, which he finds in the judgment, sets up a dynamism on the part of the human mind, which as such is infinite. If being as such is illimited, which permits of no doubt for if being as such were limited, then the more limited it is the more it is being, which is absurd, and if the object of intelligence is being, then we must suppose at the source of mind's efforts to know being a tendency which is likewise illimited.

Now of God, the transcendent, the human mind can know only what it can gather from continued reflection on the transcendental aspects of being. It is not necessary to develop here at length the manner in which St. Thomas regarded these different aspects. Suffice it to say that, in relation to intelligence and knowledge, being is true; everything that participates in being is transcendently true:

objective falsehood is impossible. Considered in relation to tendency and ultimately to will, being is good : *bonum est quod omnia appetunt*.

Being is that which is prior and most fundamental, and in the true and the good there is an indirect reference to it : nothing is true or good except in so far as it is. Yet this priority of being must not be misunderstood. If being, by its very necessity, imposes itself, it must not be looked upon as something entirely from without where mind is considered. The human intellect is never entirely passive. It is endowed, as we have remarked, with the active power of modifying itself. Essentially finite and perfectible, it is endowed with its own nature, which is the source of its own characteristic tendency. The successive actuations that it receives are not something merely successive and detached. They are a coming to act of a potency which has its own specific nature and hence its own specific tendencies. Hence, if being in virtue of its necessity imposes itself, we must be prepared for a certain active reception on the part of mind of which it is the adequate object. Mind tends by its nature towards the conquest of being ; it has a natural desire to acquire it for itself in knowledge and in perfection.

The unity of being in its transcendental properties becomes, therefore, the natural objective of the human mind. But we must bear in mind the analogical character of the concept of being to appreciate at its true value the unity of being and its transcendentals. If this unity may be said to be unique when viewed in opposition to absolute non-being, in itself it is something necessarily unstable. Its objective content, irreducible to the unity, the homogeneity of the univocal, and yet not entirely disintegrated by an equivocation, furnishes identity and diversity at the same time. This is not to make the analogical concept a mere hybrid of a complete homogeneity and a complete diversity. But it points to the necessity for knowledge of reducing being to its fundamental unity. For as St. Thomas well says in the text we have chosen as theme : *non enim ens de multis aequivoce dicitur, sed per analogiam, et sic oportet fieri reductionem in unum*. Thus while being in its transcendental

significance applies to all there is or can be, there must be something in it which allows of its application to God, Pure Act, as well as to matter, pure potentiality. And yet such an application can in no way be univocal. Here we necessarily arrive at the same conclusion for knowledge as for being. Analogy implies necessarily different relations to a fundamental unity. This unity is found in God alone.

Thus the different relations to being, that characterise everything which is a possible participation of being, send the human mind to God in search of their ultimate consistency and intelligibility. In regard to the finite these relations, as we have seen, may be epitomised in the single phrase of total dependence in His regard. Out of relation to Him nothing, as being, has consistency or intelligibility for thought. For the same reason nothing has consistency or intelligibility for the tendency of mind which we may designate as desire. Hence, inevitably, the very tendency of the human mind towards being in its transcendental aspects is possible because there is a desire of God.

(3.) MAN'S PERFECTION.

The unity of being, therefore, is to be found in God, and likewise that of knowledge and complete intelligibility. It follows that the metaphysical unity of man's perfection is to be sought in God alone. The desire of knowledge, which St. Thomas found at the source of all research, is a manifestation of that dynamic force which leads the creature beyond itself in search of its perfection.¹ If all men desire to know, if in common with all being they tend towards

1.—Cum amor naturalis nihil aliud sit quam inclinatio naturae indita ab auctore naturae.—Ia., Q. LX, art. 1, ad 3. Unaquaque res naturaliter appetit perfectionem sui. Unde et materia dicitur appetere formam, sicut imperfectum appetit suam perfectionem. Cum igitur intellectus, a quo homo est id quod est, in se consideratus sit in potentia omnia, nec in actum eorum reducat nisi per scientiam . . . sic naturaliter unusquisque desiderat scientiam sicut materia formam.—*Metaph.*, lib. I, lect. 1.

what is for them their own proper operation,¹ it is because in common with all being they tend towards their perfection. The search for knowledge is a search for truth: truth is the proper good of intellect. Joined to intellect in man there is will, and will is the tendency of man towards his perfection. But seeing that the ultimate end of the universe is God, whatever may be the apparent opposition of will and intellect that manifests itself in conscious life, it is not difficult to see that the ultimate intelligibility of their action must derive from the ultimate metaphysical unity of being and of knowledge.

If, as we have seen, it had importance for reality to show that all being is ultimately related to a divine thought, the same reduction to God has supreme importance for mind itself. Metaphysics, having for object the final end, the ultimate unity, the good of the entire universe,² we may surmise its fundamental significance for man; to it belongs the task of finding that object which must unify the sources of his being and render intelligible his instinctive search for unity which is an index of his tendency towards perfection.

St. Thomas himself worked out this relation of metaphysics to man's perfection. What is more, when it deserves the highest eulogies as sovereign and queen of all art and science it is precisely, he says, because of its relation to man's perfection, which is his beatitude. For where many things are ordained to one end it is necessary, Aristotle had reasoned, that there be one ruler and one director. And he had experienced little difficulty in attributing to the divine science this eminent function.

The way in which St. Thomas views the excellence of metaphysics is not without its significance. He indifferently seeks the reason of this preeminence from its attitude towards the end of the entire universe and from the consideration of

1.—Quaelibet res naturalem inclinationem habet ad suam propriam operationem Propria autem operatio hominis in quantum homo, est intelligere. Per hoc enim ab omniis aliis differt. Unde naturaliter desiderium hominis inclinatur ad intelligendum, et per consequens ad sciendum.—*Metaph.* lib. I, lect. 1.

2.—*Ethic.*, lib. I, lect. 2; *Metaph.*, lib. II, lect. 7; *Ibid.*, lib. VI, lect. 1.

man's beatitude. So doing, he integrated the beatitude of man within the wider synthesis where man, like all being, is seen to tend towards the good of the whole creation, God. In this there is the important subordination of man's beatitude to the true metaphysical unity of being. Whether we view being or knowledge with all its implications, both must find their unity in God. Man inserts himself necessarily in the return of being to God, and in search of his perfection he is in search of God.

The human mind, therefore, is necessarily turned towards God for the ultimate intelligibility of its tendencies. Its very aspiration towards unity reveals its necessary orientation. To say it desires to see things in the divine perspective is a rather good expression of its fundamental desire. Yet we cannot take final refuge in an expression. To see things in the divine perspective is to see them from God's view-point. But to see things as God sees them, at least in so far as that would be possible for the finite mind, what does it imply?

It implies at least a new problem. And that already is an important finding. Seeing that the finite mind as such, left to itself, is incapable of seeing God, what is to be said of its desire to see things in the divine perspective? Philosophy declares that speaking from a purely natural and human view-point such an ideal of human knowledge is utopian. It declares itself incapable of realising the very ambition that seems to be at its source. By finding the ultimate unity of things in God, and by revealing the tendency of mind towards unity, philosophy necessarily gives rise to a new problem.

It is important to emphasise this fact that philosophy of itself points to a problem that transcends it. No matter how we regard it, philosophic thought, and to a certain extent scientific thought, is haunted by the ideal of an ultimate unification of knowledge. M. E. Gilson has put the point admirably. "Since the Renaissance," he writes, "modern thought appears to us as continually urged on by the ideal of a system of human knowledge integrally unified".¹

1.—*La Philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, Paris, 1924, p. 117.

Yet, we fear there is an essential ambiguity in what the eminent writer adds, when he says, "Now this ideal that the modern mind will force itself to attain, until an Auguste Comte will demonstrate that the unification of the sciences is not possible from the view-point of sciences, it is not reason which first conceived it; she received it as an inheritance from theology, and from a theology which already knew that the perfect unification towards which human knowledge tends is not possible from the mere view-point of reason".¹ Such, he claims, is the great metaphysical intuition of which the Augustinians of the thirteenth century are the representatives, and it may be added that with St. Bonaventure it attains its maximum of clarity.²

When M. Gilson thus vindicates for theology the honour of indicating the impossibility of an ultimate unification of knowledge as a human ideal, he has been drawing a marked opposition between St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure, which, if it is fecund from many view-points, is here, we submit, misleading.³ We can admire M. Gilson's work in so far as he has brought out very clearly the autonomy of philosophy for St. Thomas. But we ask ourselves if the excellent work of M. Gilson has not here "*les défauts de ses qualités*" It is true that for St. Thomas philosophy has its own autonomy, but this autonomy does not guarantee for philosophy self-sufficiency under every aspect. In the present instance, notably, the very metaphysic of St. Thomas points beyond itself. It is of comparatively little importance where the idea came from historically if the metaphysics of St. Thomas has immanent in it the idea that M. Gilson says comes from theology. To imply, as he does, that it is characteristically Augustinian as opposed to Thomist, is unjust to the metaphysical thought of Aquinas which, as we hope to have

1.—Op. cit., p. 117.

2.—Ibid.

3.—Op. cit., p. 116. The fact that here it is rather a question of the psychological influence of faith, which St. Bonaventure had emphasised, may explain why M. Gilson passes so brusquely to the wider metaphysical view point, a transition which he does not himself seem to have remarked. If philosophy for St. Thomas, as M. Gilson well remarks, is sufficient on its own ground, that does not prevent its pointing beyond itself, and this M. Gilson has not remarked, and yet it is fundamental.

shown, by finding the metaphysical unity of being and of knowledge in God, and by recognising the fundamental tendency of mind towards such a unity, at the same time declares that humanly this ideal is unattainable. So doing, philosophy declares its own insufficiency; it gives rise to a new problem, that of the desire of God's vision.

In every judgement there is for St. Thomas an implicit affirmation of an ultimate unity, and thus this new problem is immanent in the judgement itself. While St. Thomas denied all immediate intuition of the Absolute in this life, he admitted a certain implicit affirmation of God in every judgement. He does so from the twofold view-point of man's desire of perfection and of knowledge.¹ And when we examine well the necessary disjunction that such a transcendental affirmation implies at the heart of every judgement, we are sent back to the source of affirmation as dynamic which, ever pushing back the limits of experience, seeks the intelligibility of being as such and postulates the Absolute.²

In every judgement intelligence implicitly affirms the Absolute, and hence a view-point from which all is fully intelligible. If the search for knowledge is a search for being, what is the secret of this dynamism which at every step postulates the view-point of complete intelligibility? If the human mind's natural horizon is being in the unity of its transcendental properties and it knows that this unity is but a pale reflection of the supereminent unity of being in God, perhaps it is that its conquest of being is vivified by a secret desire that it dares not formulate of itself? If this search

1.—Cognoscere Deum esse, in aliquo communi, sub quadam confusione, est nobis naturaliter insertum, in quantum scilicet Deus est hominis beatitudo; homo enim naturaliter desiderat beatitudinem, et quod naturaliter desideratur ab homine naturaliter cognoscitur ab eodem. Cognitio Dei naturaliter omnibus est inserta et similiter desiderium summa boni Homo naturaliter ordinatur ad Deum et per cognitionem et per affectum in quantum est ejus particeps.—*Sent.*, III, dist. XXIII, art. 4, q1a., 3. Omnia cognoscencia cognoscunt *implicite* Deum in quolibet cognito. Sicut enim nihil habet rationem appetibilis nisi per similitudinem primae bonitatis, ita nihil est cognoscibile nisi per similitudinem primae veritatis. The *rapprochement* that St. Thomas makes between the two viewpoints is to be remarked here. See *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 2, ad 1. Cf. also C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXVIII.

2.—Tunc autem judicat intellectus de re apprehensa quando dicit quod aliquid est vel non est.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art 3.

for being, under its transcendental aspects, supposes on our part a tendency which is incessant and infinite, must we not seek the fixed point, the *primum immobile*, which renders such an incessant tendency intelligible? If knowledge is a search of essence and cause, and if it arrives at the ultimate cause of all, what will be its attitude?

These are so many questions that arise for mind, whose immediate horizon is all possible being, and truth, and good, but which is forced to recognise that in a unity infinitely superior to the abstract unity of the transcendentals the triad of beauty, truth and goodness is realised in one Absolute Being.

Pretending to no intuition of God, exempt from all ontologism, the metaphysic of St. Thomas, which finds the immediate and natural object of the human mind in being and its transcendental properties, recognises that, if metaphysical research is not to be rendered nugatory and vain, an attempt must be made to relate the ever-changing horizon of this abstract unity with the supereminently stable unity of the Absolute. The dynamism of mind, which has for immediate object this abstract unity, must be rendered intelligible in function of its attitude towards the ultimate unity of being in God.

By its solution of this problem metaphysics will have contributed something towards man's search for perfection. It will find itself in a position to indicate, at least, in what direction lies the solution for the ultimate opposition that appears in the being of man. For if man, like all creation, tends towards perfection, yet he is free, and while will as nature tends necessarily towards the good, as faculty of choice, it may be true or false to this tendency towards perfection. If philosophy is impotent to reduce this opposition to unity, it may at least, by disclosing the true hierarchy of being, point out to man what his attitude must be. It will bring home to him that he is finite and that he is not unto himself the end of his own being, that there is but one true and ultimate metaphysical unity, and hence but one true and only Final End, God. There is something about

what St. Thomas calls the "vehement unity" of being, that the slightest advance in its recognition inundates the soul with joy, greater even than that felt by

. . . some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken.

It sets us dreaming of a final possible unity that would bring the solution of the antinomies of our being. That metaphysics has an intimate relation with this search for unity and ultimate perfection was a reason, indeed the principal one, that impelled St. Thomas to call the science of being the "divine science."

CHAPTER III.

METAPHYSICS AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

THE question of mind's relation to God arises inevitably once we consider either the return of being to God, or mind's own fundamental aspiration towards the unity of knowledge. When we have envisaged the dynamism of entire creation and its necessary orientation, through the mind of man, to God, the question immediately arises: what will be the position of mind itself in His regard? At the conclusion of our search for unity we have found ourselves in presence of a similar problem: is the *elan* of mind's activity to be explained by a desire of the divine vision?

So to formulate the question is to place it immediately in the wider setting of the relation of nature and the supernatural: to ask if there is a desire of God's vision is to give rise to the wider problem. St. Thomas briefly indicates the reason. Man's beatitude, he says, consists in the vision of God, which is called eternal life. By grace alone can man attain such an eminent destiny; it is entirely beyond his natural forces.¹

Yet, as we have shown, it is a question that arises necessarily for philosophy, and within philosophy. We have now to show that philosophy takes upon itself the task of giving its own characteristic solution to the problem that emerges out of it. If, as the research of the finite mind, philosophy is incapable of realising its own ambitions, it has yet to be seen to what extent it is capable of indicating in what direction

1.—In ipsa enim visione divina, ostendimus esse hominis beatitudinem quae vita aeterna dicitur, ad quam sola gratia Dei ducimur et dicimur pervenire, quia talis visio omnem creaturae facultatem excedit, nec est possibile ad eam pervenire nisi divino munere deputantur.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LII. "Le principe fondamental," writes Scheeben, *Dogmatique*, trad. de l'abbé P. Bélet, tome III, n. 701, "et la clef de la doctrine catholique relative à la destination surnaturelle de la créature raisonnable et à l'institution de la grace qui y correspond, résident dans le caractère essentiellement surnaturel du terme final, de la consommation définitive où Dieu veut la conduire en fait."

these aspirations are to be satisfied. If we have pronounced the word "insufficiency" in its regard, the better to emphasise the fundamental problem to which it gives rise, we now hope to establish the autonomy of philosophy within its own domain, a singularly extended one it is true, yet all the more real since it alone can render finally intelligible philosophic research as such. We must inquire to what extent the metaphysic of Aquinas may be said to imply a natural desire in the human mind for God's vision, and whether for the ultimate intelligibility of this desire the *possibility* of the divine vision is seen to be demanded.

It is true, historically, that St. Thomas was in possession of the knowledge of the *fact* of human destination to this vision. He knew it by faith through a divine revelation. But if the question of the desire of this vision arises in philosophy itself, it is necessary to investigate to what extent philosophy is capable of throwing light on such a question. We have not to waste time on the useless speculation as to what St. Thomas would have thought were his mind not enlightened by the superior light of faith. Elsewhere we shall indicate to what extent the question may have arisen for the unaided mind of humanity. It is certain that the general question of a return of being to God, with its necessary implications for the human mind, has arisen for all philosophies worthy of the name. It is much more important to hold fast to what we have acquired: such a question is immanent to philosophy by its very nature.

Because St. Thomas so clearly distinguished philosophy and faith, and established philosophy in its true autonomy,¹ we may be confident that a mind so capable of distinguishing was capable of unifying: it is not likely that St. Thomas would have remained satisfied with a loose and merely *factual* harmony of philosophy and faith. On the contrary, his whole work was directed towards a daring search for an intelligible relation of the two orders.

Only quite recently R. P. Chenu, O.P., in an interesting article on the evolution of theology as science in the

1.—Gilson, *La Philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, p. 116.

thirteenth century has shown that St. Thomas precisely undertook the perilous task of installing Aristotelian Science within the domain of faith¹ where a long line of predecessors had for the most part been satisfied with a factual subordination, or what was worse still, with the merest heteronomy of science and supernatural wisdom, which broke up the objective intelligibility of religious truth and divided human personality against itself.²

If this is true from the view-point of theology, if St. Thomas was able, starting from the given of faith to integrate the Aristotelian conception of science in an intelligible manner, it remains to be seen how, starting from philosophy itself, he could return, as it were, and integrate the supernatural in a vast intelligible synthesis. It was along the lines suggested by the natural desire of God's vision that St. Thomas sought the answer ; if metaphysical thought is not to remain the merest mutilated outline, a science *manquée* in the truest sense of the word, it must seek to regain, so far as that is possible, the unity which it dreams.

(1.) INTELLIGIBILITY OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

What, it will be said, can metaphysics have to do with the supernatural ? Is not human reason condemned in advance to arrest its steps on its threshold ? In particular, the vision of God as something essentially supernatural, does it not transcend the powers of human reason ? In reply, it may not be without a certain utility to see in what sense precisely metaphysics may be said to look beyond the horizons of what is merely natural.

As against a crude dogmatic denial of the supernatural and of its possibility, is it not clear that metaphysics has in a sense not only established the possibility of the supernatural, but its very existence, once it has firmly established the

1.—M. D. Chenu, O.P., *La théologie comme science au XIII^e siècle*.—*Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, Paris, 2 (1927), pp. 31-71.

2.—*Op. cit.*, p. 67.

existence of God? Of God's nature human reason has sufficient knowledge to prove His existence, yet the final word of philosophy is that the essence of God transcends infinitely the powers of human reason; it remains an ineffable mystery in the strictest sense. St. Thomas is therefore far from excluding the supernatural from the domain of reason under every aspect.¹

The supernatural, need it be said, has a certain necessary reference to our human way of viewing things. Lamennais for instance essays to deny the possibility of the supernatural by simply saying that God has His own nature, existence and laws on the one hand, and that, on the other, the creature also has its own nature and laws, which are natural to it. "What," he asks "is designated as the supernatural order. God and creation, that is all there is; outside of that nothing is possible. God has His own essence and His laws proper to Him, derived from the essence and laws of God. . . . The necessary permanent relations that exist between God and creation do not alter the respective laws of either one or the other; on the contrary, they result merely from this essence itself. They are therefore only two orders, that is to say, two general modes of existence possible: the mode of existence that appertains to God, and the mode of existence proper to creation, both are equally *natural* and conform to the nature and essence of God, and to the nature and essence of creation. Every other order that one forces oneself to imagine would be either an incomprehensible illusion of the mind, or would imply the negation either of God or of creation by destroying at once their essence and distinctive characteristic."²

Clearly, the knowledge that Lamennais had of God, in virtue of which he attributed to Him His own proper essence and laws, destroyed neither the essence of the creature, nor

1.—Cum dicitur quod nulla natura potest supra seipsam, non est intelligendum quod non possit ferri in aliquod objectum quod est supra se; manifestum est enim quod intellectus noster naturali cognitione potest aliqua cognoscere quae sunt supra seipsum, ut patet in naturali cognitione Dei: sed illud intelligendum est, quod natura non potest ferri in actum excedentem proportionem suae virtutis.—Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 3, ad 2.

2.—*Esquisse d'une philosophie*, tome II, p. 81.

of God who transcended the creature's natural powers of comprehension. In regard to God, wrote St. Thomas, there is a two-fold order of truth ; there are, as it were, two degrees of divine intelligibility.¹ One of these orders contain truths that are amenable to human reason ; the other, truths that essentially transcend its grasp. Lest we imperil in any way the divine reality, as Lamennais seemed to fear, by introducing into its absolute simplicity as such a distinction of that which is natural and that which is supernatural, St. Thomas adds that this twofold order of truth arises not from God's view-point but from the view-point of human knowledge.²

That which ontologically is supernatural may be present to the human mind ; what is excluded is that the supernatural as supernatural be present in a supernatural manner as long as mind is limited to its natural mode of action. In regard to God, says St. Thomas, the human mind comports itself in different ways. Availing ourselves of this diversity which arises necessarily for the human mind, we may further see that the supernatural presents itself under different aspects. It is certain that as regards the intimate life of God *ad intra*, in so far as He is one Nature and three Persons, human reason is absolutely incapable of positive knowledge. When mind has concluded to the existence of God, and has seen that the concept of personality must be verified in Him, it simply abstains from saying how this concept is to be realised in God. On last analysis it is reduced to showing that the adversary of a trinity of divine persons in one divine nature cannot show any inherent contradiction in such a conception.

In this negative position there is a significance for the intelligibility of the supernatural. When St. Thomas outlines his views of the uses of philosophy in the domain of faith he adds the important function which philosophy fulfills as against the adversaries of the dogmas of faith. Its rôle,

1.—Duplici igitur veritate divinatorum intelligibilium existente, una ad quam rationis inquisitio pertingere potest, altera quae omne ingenium humanae rationis excedit.—C.G., lib. I, cap. IV.

2.—Dico autem duplicem veritatem divinatorum, non ex parte ipsius Dei . . . sed ex parte cognitionis nostrae . . . quae ad divina cognoscenda diversimode se habet. C.G., lib. I, cap. IX.

he says, is to overthrow the objections of the adversary by showing that they are either false or not necessary.¹ Now what is the significance of such an attitude? Envisaged in the person of St. Thomas it serves to throw into relief the robust intellectualism of Catholic philosophy, which denies that truth can be opposed to truth, and that what intelligence immediately perceives to be impossible is simply speaking impossible, since reality as such is intelligible. Not even God, he said, could produce the impossible, but with admirable justice of expression, he indicates the inappropriateness of such a mode of expression. It does not mean that the human mind is the measure of all truth, but St. Thomas manifests a strong confidence that the human mind can answer at least its own objections. If faith is beyond reason yet both have come from God, and it is impossible that God should be the author of falsity. Ultimately there can be no opposition, and St. Thomas sums up his view in that magnificent phrase: "*si quid autem in dictis philosophorum inveniatur contrarium fidei, hoc non est philosophiae, sed magis philosophiae abusus ex defectu rationis*".²

1.—Sic igitur in sacra doctrina philosophia possumus tripliciter uti . . . Tertio, ad resistendum his quae contra fidem dicuntur; sive ostendendo esse falsa, sive ostendendo non esse necessaria.—*In Boethium De Trinit.*, Q. II, art. 3. Quae igitur fidei sunt, non sunt tentanda probari, nisi per auctoritatem his qui auctoritates suscipiunt. Apud alios sufficit defendere non esse impossibile quod praedicat fides.—*Ia.*, Q. XXXII, art. 1. Secundo modo (i.e. probabiliter) se habet ratio quae inducitur ad manifestationem Trinitatis, quia, scilicet, Trinitate posita, congruunt hujusmodi rationes. Non tamen ita quod per has rationes sufficienter probetur trinitas personarum.—*Ibid.* ad. 2.

2.—Dona gratiarum hoc modo naturae adduntur quod eam non tollunt, sed magis perficiunt; unde et lumen fidei, quod nobis gratis infunditur, non destruit lumen naturalis cognitionis nobis naturaliter inditum. Quamvis autem naturale lumen mentis humanae sit insufficiens ad manifestationem eorum quae per fidem manifestantur, tamen impossibile est quod ea quae per fidem nobis traduntur divinitus sunt contraria his quae per naturam nobis sunt indita: oporteret enim alterum esse falsum: et cum utrumque sit nobis a Deo, Deus esset nobis auctor falsitatis: quod est impossibile . . . Sicut autem sacra doctrina fundatur super lumen fidei, ita philosophia super lumen naturale rationis. Unde impossibile est quod ea quae sunt philosophiae, sunt contraria iis quae sunt fidei, sed deficiunt ab eis . . . Et ideo possibile est ex principiis philosophiae hujusmodi errorem refellere, vel ostendendo omnino esse impossibilem vel non esse necessarium.—*In Boethium De Trinit.*, Q. II, art. 3, c.

In regard to the question of the vision of God is the human mind in exactly the same position as it is in relation to the ineffable mystery of the Holy Trinity? Clearly when St. Thomas treats of the latter mystery his attitude is entirely negative. On the other hand we have seen that the question of the divine vision arises for mind once it seeks the ultimate unity of being. Does not God as Truth itself ever occupy the horizon of human efforts at reflection? When St. Thomas declares the transcendence of this vision he is careful to distinguish a twofold incapacity in regard to knowledge. Mind's incapacity might arise, he remarks, for two reasons; on the one hand, either because the object in question is completely alien to it, as for instance the object of hearing is alien to that of sight, or on the other hand, because the object transcends, by the very force of its intelligibility, the feeble grasp of finite mind. He concludes that the divine substance is not something completely extraneous where the human mind is concerned; it merely transcends its natural forces.¹

Yet, the question arises if, in regard to the divine vision, the human mind is capable, not only of refuting the objections of possible adversaries, but of arriving at a positive conclusion in its regard? Possibility may have a twofold meaning: on the one hand, that which has not been proven impossible, on the other that which, simply speaking, is possible. What did St. Thomas hope to prove in this regard? On what suppositions, if any, does the progress of his thought depend?

1.—*Divina substantia non sic est extra facultatem intellectus creati quasi aliquid omnino extraneum ab ipso, sicut est sonus a visu, vel substantia immaterialis a sensu . . . sed est extra facultatem intellectus creati sicut excedens virtutem ejus; sicut excellentia sensibilibus sunt extra facultatem sensuum: unde et Philosophus dicit, quod intellectus noster se habet ad rerum manifestissima sicut oculus noctuae ad lucem solis. Indiget igitur confortari intellectus creatus aliquo divino lumine ad hoc quod divinam essentiam videre possit.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. LIV.

(2.) THE *SUMMA CONTRA GENTILES*.

A rather facile solution of our difficulties would be found, if we could but convince the reader that the *Summa* of St. Thomas, at least so far as its first three books are concerned, is a purely philosophic work.¹ It would be clear then that the question of the desire of the divine vision not only arises in pure philosophy, but that philosophy is capable of supplying its own solution. Not a few authors have currently spoken of the *Summa Philosophica* as opposed to the *Summa Theologica*.² And only recently the controversy has been reopened in connection with the very question we are treating.

We are not convinced however of global solutions where it is a question of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. One might easily be deceived by the title "*Contra Gentiles*" into the belief that it was exclusively a work of philosophy. Moreover, the title, though not of St. Thomas himself, is a very ancient one. William of Thocco,³ disciple and biographer of St. Thomas, so describes the work of his master: "scripsit etiam Librum qui intitulum *Contra Gentiles*, stylo disertum, et rationum novitate et subtilitate profundum." Nicholas Trevet, so far back as 1310, declares: "*Contra Gentiles* IV. libros scripsit".⁴ And we have it on the authority of Petrus Marsilius that it was at the instigation of S. Raymond of Pennafort, then occupied with the conversion of the Moors

1.—Such is the opinion of G. De Broglie: "Les trois premiers livres par leur objet et leur méthode sont purement philosophiques et doivent être interprétés comme tels." Cf. De la place etc.—*Recherches de science religieuse*, tome XIV (1924), p. 193 sqq.; tome XV (1925), p. 40-45.

2.—"Chronologiquement parlant, la Somme contre les Gentils, justement appelée aussi *Somme philosophie*. . . M. Grabmann, *La somme théologique*, Paris, p. 43. "Seulement, comme ceux qui peuvent le plus peuvent le moins, on comprend que saint Thomas d'Aquin ait pu écrire, outre sa Somme Théologique, sa Somme adressée aux païens, où il part de la Philosophie telle qu'elle peut être dans le degré moyen et purement humain."—Gratry, *La connaissance de Dieu*, Paris, 1864, p. 183. Cf., p. 196, where the "*somme philosophique*" is placed over against the "*somme théologique*."

3.—*Vita*, cap. 4, num. 18, apud Bollandi continuatores.

4.—See De Rubeis (1687-1775), *Dissertatio Praevia*, ed. Marietti (1896).

and infidels, that St. Thomas composed the said *Summa*.¹

At first sight such a view seems to be confirmed by St. Thomas himself. Having sedulously distinguished the two orders of divine intelligibility, as we have seen, he adds: "primum nitemur ad manifestationem illius veritatis quam fides profitetur et ratio investigat inducendo rationes *demonstratives* et probabiles . . . per quas veritas confirmetur et adversarios convincatur".² Taking the division of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* one might easily apply the citation to the first three books, exclusive of the fourth which is obviously theological. But we cannot disguise from ourselves the fact that already at the outset, in the second chapter, he has said: "Propositum nostrae intentionis est *veritatem quam fides nostra catholica profitetur* pro nostro modulo manifestare, errores eliminando contrarios."³ With both texts in view De Rubeis claimed that the proper title was *De Veritate Fidei Catholicae*.⁴

On the other hand, R. P. Bouyges rightly points out that the term "Gentes" was not necessarily homogeneous in its application.⁵ The Jews and Musulmans had a theology of their own and a metaphysic more or less impregnated with religious ideas. The Arab thinkers of the time were divided into two camps of philosophers and theologians, and it is frequently the doctrine of the theologians (Mutakallimîn) that is directly envisaged by St. Thomas.

A general inquiry, therefore, leads just to a twofold difficulty. On the one hand, we are face to face with the *Summa Contra Gentiles* as apparently an apologetic work, and that leads to the further question of the precise rôle of

1.—Veteres allegantur qui recenscent S. Thomae opus, quod *Summa Contra Gentiles* inscribi solet, hortatore S. Raymundo de Penafort, elucubratum. Cf. De Rubeis, *ibid.*, no. 2.

2.—C.G., lib. I, cap. IX.

3.—C.G., lib. I, cap. II. This was particularly insisted upon by R. P. Blanche in his controversy with R. P. De Broglie as to the philosophic character of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. See Note concernant l'étude de M. G. De Broglie, *Revue de philosophie*, XXIV (1924), pp. 444-449.

4.—*Op. cit.* Dissertatio 2. Genuinus operis titulus constituitur.

5.—R. P. Bouyges has done useful work in bringing together the different texts that are significant for the solution of this problem. See Le plan du *Contra Gentiles* de Saint Thomas, *Archives de philosophie*, vol. III, cahier II, *Etudes sur saint Thomas*, Paris (1925), pp. 176-197.

apologetics in its relation to theology.¹ On the other, we are in the presence of a certain vagueness as to the precise tenets of the adversaries, which St. Thomas was only too willing to admit.²

We prefer, therefore, to resume our thought on this question under two headings. On the one hand, we shall endeavour to show that the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is neither *exclusively* nor *specifically* theological; on the other, we do not anticipate any difficulty in proving that the attitude of St. Thomas, where our present question is concerned, is sufficiently characteristic to warrant an examination of the desire of the divine vision in philosophy.³ This we deem sufficient to justify a philosophic treatment of this question, as against those who would declare it entirely beyond the purview of human reason. In this way the converging results of our two previous chapters, which show that the

1.—Thus R. P. Blanche insists that the *Summa Contra Gentiles* "n'est nullement un ouvrage de philosophie mais ce que nous appelons maintenant un traité d'apologétique." Cf. *Rev. de philosophie*, XXIV. (1924), p. 441 sqq.. Communication de M. de Broglie et Note de M. Blanche. R. P. Blanche admits that "les matières dont il traite dépasse les limites d'une apologétique strictement dite."

2.—*Contra singulorum autem errores difficile est procedere propter duo. Primo, quia non ita sunt nobis nota singulorum errantium dicta sacrilega, ut ex his quae dicunt, possimus rationes assumere ad eorum errores destruendos. Hoc enim modo uti sunt antiqui doctores in destructionem errorum Gentilium . . . vel saltem inter Gentiles conversati et in eorum doctrinis eruditi. Secundo, quia quidem eorum, ut Machometistae et Pagani, non conveniunt nobiscum in auctoritate alicujus scripturae, per quam possint convinci; sicut contra Judaeos disputare possumus per Vetus Testamentum; contra hereticos, per Novum. Hi vero neutrum recipiunt. Unde necesse est ad naturalem rationem recurrere, cui omnes assentire coguntur; quae tamen in rebus divinis deficiens est.*—C.G., lib. I, cap. II.

3.—Naturally, this latter point is all that is demanded to justify an examination of the question of the desire of the vision of God in philosophy. Should it be urged that because of his adversaries the Mutakallimin (Cf. Bouyges art. cited) who were theologians, the plan of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* was theological in their sense, it would yet have to be proved that *in se* and for St. Thomas himself it was so. Possibly the confusion arises because both view-points are present. Naturally, authors are inclined, according as they espouse one or other of the two points of view, to see the whole *Summa* in a particular light. For our part, we should say that *in se*, and on the conception of St. Thomas, the *Summa* is neither exclusively nor specifically theological. Later, we indicate in what way precisely he could have rejoined his adversaries the Theologians, and envelop the non-theologians as well.

question arises necessarily for philosophy, are confirmed in the light of St. Thomas' attitude in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

We are not aware that any writer has gone so far as to affirm the exclusively theological character of this work of St. Thomas.¹ Cajetan approaches nearest to such a position. To support his own interpretation, as we shall see, he makes out a fundamental distinction between the Saint's consideration of man from the view-point of theology and from that of philosophy. No doubt such a distinction does exist, but what is questionable is the basis that Cajetan finds in St. Thomas for it. As a theologian, St. Thomas, he says, simply considers the creature, not according to its own nature, but in so far as it is related and ordained to God. In confirmation of this he appeals to the Fourth Chapter of the Second Book of *Contra Gentiles* where St. Thomas writes : " For human philosophy considers them (creatures) as such ; wherefore we find that the different parts of philosophy correspond to the different genera of things. On the other hand the Christian faith does not consider them as such, for instance it considers fire not as such, but as representing the sublimity of God, and as being directed to Him in any way whatsoever."²

It is evident that Cajetan makes the most of the last words of this citation. Yet, it is surprising that it did not occur to the celebrated commentator that such a view of things would have the inconvenience of proving too much. So that philosophy would, therefore, be reduced to considering things in their own nature, and not *relate ad Deum*? On such

1.—It is doubtful if Fr. Joseph Rickaby's view really enlightens us as to St. Thomas' position in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. He says (see *Studies on God and His Creatures*, London, 1924, pp. 1 sqq.) this *Summa* is a philosophical work, " but from the outset the author avows that his philosophy is checked by faith, and that he is no votary of free thought."

2.—Potest dici, writes Cajetan, quod auctor tractat de homine ut theologus, cujus, ut II. Contra Gentes cap. 4 dicitur, est considerare creaturas non secundum proprias naturas, sed ut ad Deum sunt relatae.—*Sancti Thomae Opera Omnia*, Leonine ed., Comm. in Iam-IIae., Q. III, art. 8. Cf. also Fr. N. Del Prado, O.P., *De Veritate Fundamentalí Philosophiæ Christianæ* Friburgi Helv., 1911, p. 622, where the opinion of Cajetan is cited with approval.

reasoning it would be very easy to reduce St. Thomas' contribution to pure philosophy, seeing that as a metaphysician he always considered things *relate ad Deum*. In effect, we have but to advance to the paragraph which follows to find the key to the distinction that St. Thomas places between philosophy and theology. "If, however, there are certain matters which are considered by the philosopher and believer alike, such matters are treated on different principles; for the philosopher takes his argument from the proper and immediate causes of things; whereas the believer has recourse to the First Cause, for instance that it has been thus delivered by God, or because it conduces to God's glory, or that God's power is infinite." And if we advance further we shall discover what meaning is to be attributed to the Saint's dictum that philosophy considers the creature in itself. "For in the teaching of philosophy which considers creatures in themselves and leads us from them to the knowledge of God, the first consideration is about creatures, and the last of God: whereas in the teaching of faith, which considers creatures only in their relation to God, the consideration about God takes the first place, and that about creatures the last." So that philosophy does advance to God, and if there is a certain exclusiveness, it is from the viewpoint of faith which considers the creature only in so far as it is related to God. But it would be weak logic to infer that since there is a certain opposition between faith and philosophy, and because faith has to do with creatures *only* in relation to God, that philosophy does not at all envisage them in this perspective. To maintain the difference it suffices to hold that philosophy considers the creature both in itself and in its relation to God. A hasty or exclusive reading of the text cited by Cajetan would possibly lead one to overlook the rather elementary distinction we have indicated, but the remainder of the chapter certainly dissipates any ambiguity that arises as to the thought of Aquinas.

A second point we intend to make is that the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is not *specifically* theological. It is to be remarked, however, that this is not essential to our purpose.

For the question at issue the third point we have indicated, that the Saint's attitude is sufficiently remarkable to warrant an examination of the question in philosophy, would suffice. For completeness, we add the present consideration before taking up the final point we have indicated for treatment.

The real innovation of St. Thomas in his application of the Aristotelian concept of science was that he removed theology from the vague and frequently heterogeneous state of the "sacra doctrina" with its texts from Scripture, glosses and commentaries. Before him little effort had been made to disengage in scientific fashion a body of truths within the domain of faith. The exposition of faith, the answers to difficulties that suggested themselves, all seemed on the same level of undifferentiated content, and the question of a possible hierarchy and subordination of the sciences to theology was either left in the vague, or the merest heteronomy was installed in virtue of an adapted doctrine of a "twofold truth." Aquinas, by finding in the dogmas of faith the principles that would correspond to the principles required by Aristotle for his ideal of science, and further by a true doctrine of the subordination of all knowledge to theology as wisdom which, being supreme, had not to justify itself,—in this like metaphysics,—before the tribunal of the lower sciences, was in the position truly to found theology on a systematic basis. By thus throwing into relief the possibility of a science of theology we are already far removed from the mere immediate commentaries and glosses, and what may be called the defensive aspect of theology falls into a subordinate position.¹

1.—It is the third function of philosophy in its relation to theology as we have indicated. R. P. Chenu, to whom we are indebted for this rapid exposition of St. Thomas in relation to the constitution of theology as science, more than once insinuates that in its defensive attitude, which St. Thomas apportions to philosophy, theology is no longer specifically itself. Pointing out that St. Thomas still under the influence of tradition as to the "sacra doctrina" places the defensive attitude of theology on the same plane as its positive aspect as a doctrine says: saint Thomas, dans les Sentences (I. Sent. Prol. art. 5) mettra encore cette tache au premier plan. Mais en fait, *ce n'est pas là encore labeur spécifiquement théologique*, comme nous verrons plus loin, et Guillaume d'Auxerre n'a encore fait jusqu'ici que préciser sans les dépasser les positions reçues. *art. cited* p. 51. Speaking of St. Thomas

Specifically, theology forms a coherent system based on the first principles of faith. So constituted, the defensive function, in virtue of which it defends itself against the adversary of its principles, is no longer specifically theological. It is subordinate, and in the mind of St. Thomas, we have seen, it is to philosophy that this task falls. Now, there can be little doubt as to the defensive aspect of the first three books of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. It is preeminently directed against the "negantia sua principia."

Further, there is an aspect of this *Summa* that may not be without significance. At the very outset he undertakes to show a certain necessity of a revelation if all men are to come to a knowledge of God and of their own destiny without spending all their lives either in the darkness of ignorance or in mere sporadic searching after the light.¹ Not that St. Thomas claims immediately faith in this revelation. He is only too conscious that among his adversaries there are pagans who admit neither the old or the new testament.² But what he does claim is their consideration for such a doctrine which he proves so necessary for the bulk of mankind. He frequently insists that to examine such a doctrine, even to believe it in the sense in which any hearer may grant the doctrine of the teacher—*oportet addiscentem credere*—is not derogatory to the human mind. So that the doctrine he puts forward may be viewed materially as such, and once the attention of the adversary has been gained, St. Thomas is ready to defend it with all the power of his genius. Was not that the way to embrace at once all adversaries? If they were reasonable they were bound to consider these doctrines; once rendered docile he could hope to demolish, by the force of reasoning, their objections. So that again we see that the

himself (p. 58-59) he says: "La fonction défensive de la théologie (Cf. Guillaume d'Auxerre) persiste d'ailleurs, mais passe désormais au second plan; elle n'est pas son oeuvre par excellence et ne lui convient pas en propre, mais comme saint Thomas le dira (*Sacra doctrina, cum non habeat superiorem, disputat contra negantem sua principia*.—Ia., Q. I, art. 8) en tant que métaphysique sur-naturelle puisque, science supreme, la métaphysique doit disputer "*contra negantem sua principia*."

1.—Quod Divina naturaliter cognita convenienter hominibus credenda proponuntur.—C.G., lib. I, cap. IV.

2.—C.G., lib. I, cap. II.

process of his thought is not specifically theological, and we realise how fully St. Thomas realised the wishes of his confrère in putting into his hands the fittest weapons with which to combat all adversaries.

Finally, we may indicate to what extent the position of St. Thomas is really remarkable. In the first place, he tells us that his aim, in the first three books, has been to discover what reason is capable of knowing by itself. "In the previous books we have spoken of divine things *according as natural reason can arrive through creatures at the knowledge of them.*"¹ This he announces as he passes on to the Fourth Book which obviously is theological; it is intended to be a recapitulation of the ground covered.² Moreover, being conscious that among the adversaries there were not only jews and heretics, as he says, but also "*Machomestitae et Pagani,*" he remarks at the outset that it is obviously necessary to have recourse to natural reason. "Secondly, because some of them, like the Mohammedans and pagans, do not agree with us as to the authority of any Scripture whereby they may be convinced, in the same way as we are able to dispute with the Jews by means of the Old Testament, and with heretics by means of the New: whereas the former accept neither. Wherefore it is necessary to have recourse to natural reason, to which all are compelled to assent. And yet this is deficient in the things of God."³

Coming at the end of his text and at the beginning, this appeal to natural reason is calculated to show that St. Thomas intends to prove all that reason is capable naturally of knowing.

It is certain that the possibility of God's vision was very much before the Saint's mind. We have but to look at the

1.—C.G., lib. IV, cap. I.

2.—A similar epitome of the plan of his work is found in C.G., lib. III, cap. 1. *Quia ergo, in primo libro, de perfectione divinae naturae prosecuti sumus, in secundo autem de perfectione potestatis ipsius, secundum quod est omnium rerum productor et dominus, restat igitur in hoc tertio libro posequi de perfecta auctoritate sive dignitate ipsius, secundum quod est omnium rerum finis et rector.*

3.—C.G., lib. I, cap. II.

way he insists on it throughout the Third Book. The truth is that with both Jewish and Arabic philosophers it was looked upon as quite impossible. What was more, to dispute it seemed to them out of the question. The very forms of thought that had become, as it were, traditional excluded it.

The philosophy of Avencebrol for instance, as revealed in his work "The Source of Life",¹ is predominantly of the Neo-Platonic form. The dominating thought of this philosophy was that of emanation. Everything that exists arises gradually from one unique principle, the One, by a kind of radiation or diffusion. This unique and simple principle could not immediately beget the world of sense with its matter and multiplicity. It was necessary to intercalate in a kind of cascade of being the pure intelligences until finally one arrived at the lowest limit which was the material world. The principal innovation of Avencebrol was to have placed the divine Will at the head of the Alexandrian triad of the One, Intelligence, and Soul.

In such a system all man could ever hope for was a final union with the lowest of these intelligences that emanated from the divine Will. And if Avencebrol says that the final term to which man can arrive is the knowledge of the divine Will he is also emphatic that there is no question of knowing God except in His finite manifestations: He is above and beyond all.²

A similar consequence followed from the system of the outstanding Arab philosopher, Avicenna, not to mention Averroes. The human soul being merely the capacity for receiving all kind of perfection, its passive intellect would find its final perfection in identifying itself with the active intellect which emanates from God.³ Nor was that all.

1.—For analysis of this work of Avencebrol, or Ibn-Gabirol, see S. Munk, *Mélanges de philosophie juive et arabe*, Paris, 1927, p. 49 sqq. This author writes: "Cette philosophie (of Plotin and Proclus) devait être alors en vogue chez les Arabes ou chez les juifs d'Espagne: car, à vrai dire, le système d'émanation et des hypostases n'est nulle part exposé dans la *Source de la Vie*, et il en est toujours parlé comme d'une chose généralement connue." —*Ibid.*, p. 260.

2.—Munk, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

3.—*Ibid.*, p. 319.

The very activity of human intellect was possible in this life only in virtue of its turning to this active intellect. The acquisition of knowledge was nothing other than the accustoming oneself to union with this intelligence from which the soul receives its forms.¹

Here was a point of contact in pure philosophy which St. Thomas did not hesitate to utilise. In his brilliant study, *Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin*² M. E. Gilson has thrown into relief the fundamental significance of such a position for St. Thomas. On last analysis, the philosophy of Avicenna was Platonic. And for St. Thomas, as M. Gilson adds, there are but two general errors possible where human knowledge is concerned, between which Aristotle held the golden mean. Either all forms are innate in matter, all ideas are innate in thought, or all forms and ideas are received radically from without. But the human mind, as we have insisted, occupies neither position. Abstraction is a necessity for it.

St. Thomas' refutation of the doctrines of Avicenna is fundamentally and primitively a philosophic one.³ When it is a question in particular of the vision of God the same may be said. St. Thomas will frequently appeal to the principle that the final perfection of created being must consist in its conjunction with the principle of its being. The precise metaphysical significance of this principle we hope later to elucidate. For the moment it is important to remark the *argumentum ad hominem* that it permits in the hands of St. Thomas. Precisely for Avicenna the conjunction of human intelligence with the last of the emanated forms was the final end of man. St. Thomas on the contrary, not only in virtue of his view of knowledge, but by his metaphysical

1.—Dicit (Avicenna) enim in suo libro De anima (c. 6) quod in intellectu possibili non remanent species intelligibiles, nisi quamdiu actu intelliguntur C.G., lib. II, cap. LXXIV.

2.—*Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, Paris, 1926, pp. 5-127.

3.—Le thomisme serait donc né, en tant que philosophie, d'une décision philosophique pure. Opter contre la doctrine de Platon, pour celle d'Aristote, c'était s'obliger à reconstruire la philosophie chrétienne sur d'autres bases que celles de saint Augustin.—E. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

analysis of being, shows that the final perfection of man can only be in God. To deny that he has proved this by reason is to deny that he found a philosophic basis for obligation, or that he proved that God was the final end of all creation.

Those who insist most on the theological character of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* would claim no doubt that St. Thomas contents himself with merely refuting the arguments of the adversaries. Yet, when we reflect on the precise character of the arguments of St. Thomas from desire and from the fundamental dynamic tendencies of the rational nature, we are inclined to ask if the proof of the negative possibility would not, in this instance, be tantamount to showing the positive consistency of such a vision. If negative possibility is that which might perhaps prove objectively impossible, it is clear that the intelligibility of tendency supposes more than such a negative possibility. The tendency of the creature cannot in this instance be towards the impossible : *natura nihil facit inane*.

No one more than St. Thomas had greater care for safeguarding the truths of his religion from the derision of the infidel. He constantly inculcates the necessity for prudence in the selection of arguments, lest the infidel should judge that our faith rested on such slender bases. On the question of the eternity of the world, for instance, what prudence does he not manifest. That the world has commenced, he says, we believe, but do not demonstrate. And it is useful, he remarks, to remember this, lest by putting forward arguments which pretend to prove what is indemonstrable, we expose ourselves to the derision of the infidel.¹ Yet who, reading the proofs that figure throughout the course of the Third Book for the possibility of the vision of God, will deny that St. Thomas has the air of really demonstrating his thesis? It is the tacit admission of this that is at the source of the numerous interpretations of the Saint's doctrine since

1.—Unde mundum incepisse est credibile, non autem demonstrabile vel scibile. Et hoc utile est, ut consideretur, ne forte aliquis, quod fidei est demonstrare praesumens, rationes non necessarias inducat, quae praebeant materiam irridendi infidelibus existimantibus nos propter hujusmodi rationes credere quae fidei sunt.—Ia., Q. XLVI, art. 2.

the sixteenth century. Or, is it that St. Thomas has all at once forgotten the very prudence he inculcates on others? It is not lightly to be assumed that such was the case.

But, it will be said, what is to become of the transcendence of the supernatural if philosophy pretends to consider it? In reality, we have merely to recall the view-point of philosophy to preclude all possible misapprehension. Considering the necessary aspects of being, interested in the fundamental conditions of intelligibility, limited by its very nature to envisaging such a vision from the abstract view-point of its possibility, only an entire forgetfulness of the formal object of metaphysical reflection would lead one to hazard any conclusion as to the factual realisation of such a vision, much less to dream of a natural exigency for its acquisition on the part of the creature. Indeed, it is metaphysical thought which may hope clearly to establish the entire gratuity of such a vision, for it is conscious of the true relation of the finite to God.¹

A strict adherence to the metaphysical view-point has not only this advantage of safeguarding the distinction of nature and the supernatural, but puts us on the way of realising their intelligible relations. The absolute distinction of the two orders is not the only thing that has to be safeguarded. Constantly attaching within being what is being merely by participation to the absolute Being, God, metaphysics indicates what is the true hierarchy of being-value, and thereby supplies a necessary corrective for human knowledge, destined to ascend from sense, and spontaneously inclined to reverse the true order of things. It essays to link up its conclusions with ultimate principles that have in themselves a compelling value for mind, and attempts

1.—It is regrettable for this reason that there are certain ambiguities in the terminology of M. Durantel in his work, *Le retour à Dieu*, Paris, 1918. Thus he writes: "Ce désir est si peu inefficace que c'est sur lui que S. Thomas établit la possibilité de la vision divine et même un certain droit à l'ordre surnaturel, une convenance tout au moins et déjà une préparation."—*Op. cit.*, p. 303. A similar lack of appreciation of the metaphysical preoccupations of Aquinas is to be noted on the part of P. H. Wicksteed in his work, *The Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy Illustrated from the works of S. Thomas Aquinas*. The Hibbert Lectures, 2nd series, London, 1920. See Lecture, *The Goal Postulated by Human Nature*, pp. 118-148.

to conform itself to the true order of being. Human knowledge spontaneously constructs higher realities in function of lower. It naturally conceives the supernatural as an imitation of nature ; its natural question is, how the supernatural is to be grafted on nature.

While it is true that the march of the Saint's thought in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is, as we have seen, an ascent from the given of philosophy, yet we must not lose sight of his metaphysical outlook on things. He was constantly correcting the spontaneously non-metaphysical attitude. He knew that if for knowledge the higher is modelled on the lower, yet in reality the hierarchy of being descends from God. Once he had found the metaphysical unity of being in God, he had found the true scale of metaphysical values. Though we may say things resemble God, he writes, yet we may not reverse the phrase simply and say that He resembles them.¹ And for him seeing that creation is but the similitude of God, and that God is precisely the supernatural itself, he will say that nature itself is but a far-off imitation of the supernatural.²

He thus placed God at the centre of things. One realises it especially when he treats of God's presence in creation. As Pure Act, infinitely simple, He is present everywhere : *Totus ubique est*. Yet, adds the Saint, He may be said to approach more closely to some beings than others. Rather, finite beings are nearer Him according to their degree of perfection, and beings are distant from Him according to the measure in which they differ from Him. Thomistic metaphysics demands that God be placed at the centre, and that the hierarchy of resemblance sets out from Him in ever-growing circles : it is essentially theocentric.

1.—*Licet aliquo modo concedatur quod creatura sit similis Deo, nullo tamen modo concedendum est quod Deus sit similis creaturae; quia ut dicit Dionysius in his quae unius ordinis sunt recipitur mutua similitudo; non autem in causa et causato.*—Ia., Q. IV, art. 3, ad 4.

2.—*Cum in imperfectis inveniatur aliqua imitatio perfectorum quamvis imperfecta; in his quae per naturalem rationem cognoscuntur sunt quaedam similitudines eorum quae per fidem tradita sunt.*—*In Boethium de Trinit.* Q. II, art. 3.

Now what is most characteristic of the modern mentality in philosophy? A single word suffices to characterise it: it is anthropocentric. Without being deceived by an interpretation of Kant that would be unjust and oversimplified,¹ we may see a certain significance in his Copernican revolution. It is that henceforth man becomes increasingly the centre of things. This is not perhaps so marked in Kant himself, for whom the "ding-an-sich" remained something objective and compelling, as in Fichte and the movement of thought that took its rise in him. When he denied the Kantian thing-in-itself, complete immanence to thought arose, and the possibility of the subject's becoming "all in all" was clearly delineated. God suffered the fate of the "thing-in-itself,"—except for the hope of an ultimate realisation through the mind of man. God no longer is: He is a process of becoming.²

Without entering into the question of the possible influence of Post-Kantian philosophy on "Modernism," we may remark that an analogous attitude characterises it in regard to the supernatural. A crude rationalistic deism, frankly opposed to the very idea of the supernatural, was replaced by a doctrine that was much more insidious. The religious need was no longer to be excluded. Rather, it constituted the very elemental need of the human soul, rising up out of depths unknown, and creating for itself the supernatural. Nature was capable of progressive development: its germs, by a mere natural growth, flowered in the supernatural.

Not infrequently such a view has been put forward in reaction against the idea of the supernatural as something radically extrinsic, with no relation whatever to the nature

1.—As viewed by Kant the appeal to Copernicus was merely a question of method. It has nothing to do with the simplification of Kant that is current in certain manuals, not to speak of William James' atrocity of the Kantian view of mind as a "machine-shop." Kant's immediate efforts were directed to find a foundation for objectivity. But by a kind of intellectual atavism he hoped to find it by analysis. In this Kant was essentially Wolfian without perhaps being fully conscious of the fact.

2.—For modern views of God as becoming see Dr. Fulton J. Sheen's work, *God and Intelligence in Modern Philosophy*, London, 1925.

which it is supposed to perfect. M. Le Roy has formulated it as follows: "The error is to believe that in formulating the principle of immanence it is possible to retain the scholastic concept of nature. For what does the word nature represent from the view-point with which we are occupied for the moment, and in the system of interpretation I have before my mind? "*Quidquid rei definitione continetur*" says Hurter (Theol. dogm. tract. VI, 2nd ed., p. 266), which implies that there is question of something whose essential content is determined once for all, whose constituent factors, whose power of development and capacity for action can be assigned in advance, abstractly and intrinsically—of which consequently a static definition is possible *ne varietur*. It is a limited and closed system, a whole whose definition embraces and expresses all its content and all its power of development. Face to face with such a concept of nature the supernatural appears as a given imposed from without, having with our interior life no bond of continuity, a crude deposit added by God and introduced within us without having any roots in us (sic). On the contrary, modern philosophy considers nature from the view-point of becoming; it does not look upon it as a closed system. . ."

We have cited M. Le Roy to illustrate a view-point. We are not concerned for the moment with its truth or falsity; clearly such an objection does not do justice to the scholastic conception of nature as the principle of becoming. As for the conception of the rational nature as something closed within itself, it suffices to recall the transcendental faculties of intelligence and will to see that it is open on very wide horizons. At least, his objection points to the necessity of not resting content with the merest statement of the distinction of the two orders, but of also seeing how Grace, in the conception of St. Thomas, does not destroy, but perfects, nature.

1.—Whatever may be the truth of M. E. Roy's objections, it is to be remarked that it is modern scholastics he has in view. Cf. *Dogme et critique*, Réponse a M. Werlè, Paris, 1907, p. 60-69. We have no doubt that the scholastics referred to can defend themselves. Our interest here is with the doctrine of St. Thomas against whom obviously the objection has no force.

In truth, as long as we make man the centre of things we shall be inclined either to deny the supernatural in the true sense, to regard it as a mere growth of nature, or to exaggerate the transcendence of the supernatural by viewing it in a false perspective. St. Thomas was not embarrassed by the thought of a finite nature that was unto itself the self-sufficient source of its own perfection; on the other hand, the idea that nature could of itself uplift itself to that participation in the divine life, which for him was the result of Grace, was as patently impossible as that being cannot be and not be at the same time.

How then are we to conceive the relation of the two orders? We submit that the reply is possible only by an examination of his teaching on the soul's desire of God as it appears in his philosophy.

Because mysticism, so prevalent in the thought of the twentieth century, has been at all times accepted as the expression of such a desire, be it natural or supernatural, we may hope to find in the doctrine of Aquinas the natural basis for this movement of the soul where the divine attraction meets the soul's aspiration, and whence, from the embrace of the divine and human, has sprung all that is grand and glorious in the history of humanity. Because to-day our attitude towards mysticism is predominantly psychological, it is all the more necessary to raise its metaphysical issues, and attempt to link it up with ultimate philosophy. Consciously, or unconsciously, mysticism has always been in function of a metaphysic. The mysticism of a Plotinus implied an attitude towards the fundamental problem of matter and spirit of body and soul. What a Carlyle has not refrained from calling "mysticism" arose out of Post-Kantian philosophy. Where shall we seek the philosophy of Catholic mysticism, and in particular a solution of the very delicate problem of nature and the supernatural if not in Aquinas, Prince of philosophers, and mystic among the mystics?

PART II.

THE ASCENT OF BEING TO GOD.

Omnia intendunt assimilari Deo.

Contra Gentiles, lib. III, cap. XIX.

*Res autem intellectu
carentes, etsi tendant in
similitudinem proximorum,
non tamen ibi quiescit naturae
intentio, sed habet pro fine
assimilationem ad Summum Bonum.*

Contra Gentiles, lib. III, cap. XXV.

*Res enim materiales non sunt
intelligibiles, nisi quia nos
facimus eas intelligibiles, sunt
enim intelligibiles in potentia tantum.*

De Veritate, Q. II, art. 2.

CHAPTER I.

THE ASCENT OF BEING.

IF things ascend to God, it is because first they have come from Him. Not that the descent of being is to be conceived as that luminous cascade with its origin in full light, and dipping down in a continuous and unbroken descent, until it is finally enveloped in the shadows of the material world. The conception of a divine emanation and a necessary unfolding of God has ever hovered seductively on the horizons of human thought. From Gnostic to Neo-Platonist, from Fichte to Hegel, there is a thought that is similar beneath its various expressions. Whether it be the expansion of the Infinite or the realisation of the Absolute, there is a necessary development, a continuity that is real : the element of liberty is denied to God ; a love that is free is absent.

Not so Aquinas. That the universe should ripple into being, it was not sufficient for him that the essence of God was all-containing. There is an act of love that is free behind the creative *fiat*.

In view of this the metaphysical pretensions of humanity are limited : we have recognised the fact—to deduce being to its last detail is impossible. As actual, the universe depends on the free act of God ; as being, considered from the view-point of being as such, it participates in the necessity of God Himself. The metaphysician considers the universe under its necessary aspects. For as being is being there are necessities of being that reflect the divine Essence. These necessities the human mind may hope to discern and thereby appreciate that in which the universe most resembles God.

It is such a necessity of being that the universe, created by God, inevitably tends towards Him. Everything that

exists is suspended, as it were, from God, and, as being, is necessarily an ascent towards Him. There is a necessity which is identical with God Himself, that by which He necessarily wills Himself. It founds at once the sovereign liberty of His attitude to all without Him, and brings all things back to Him as well. All that has being down to the last material thing, which has the minimum of perfection, has come from Him ; all that is being is good and reflects Him ; there is no stream that has not its source in Him ; His empire is universal as being, undisputed from being's view-point, high above the heavens and deep as hell. Hell is as eloquent of the tendency and of the necessity of tending towards Him as heaven is, where all are gathered together in His Kingdom.¹

The free act of creation is pendant, as it were, from an act of love that is entirely necessary.² For being which is being, entirely present to itself, knowing itself in the limpidity of its essence which has no shadow, cannot but affirm itself : it wills itself by the very necessity with which it is itself, in an identity of a perfect self-possession. God is such a being, present entirely to Himself by knowledge, and present also, entirely and fully, by that love which is but His being's affirmation of itself as pure act, sovereign good, beatitude itself. God is perfect, complete and absolute. Sufficient unto Himself, He wants for nothing. He is Goodness itself, and if we speak of the diffusiveness of such goodness we must not deceive ourselves : nothing outside God could draw Him ; nothing internal could urge Him with a necessary impulse towards expansion.³ He is Pure Act.

If, accordingly, beneath the eminently free divine *fiat* the universe emerged from primeval nothingness, all the gain

1.—When M. Durantel speaks of an “ optimisme définitif ” “ puisque, en fin de compte, tout revient à Dieu, avec seulement un peu de lest jeté en cours de route (monde matériel dans le plotinisme, damnés le dogme chrétien), ” — *Le retour à Dieu*, p. 303, note I, he does not seem to have realised fully that Hell does mark a return of being to God. The demons, as we shall see, tend to God as the source of their nature ; and in so far as they reject the supernatural they fulfil the exigencies of the divine Justice. Hell, in other words, is a necessity in the present order.

2.—Cf. Ia., Q. IX, art. 2 ; C.G., lib. II, cap. XXXV.

3.—Ia., Q. XXV, art. 5.

was necessarily creation's.¹ On the part of God it was merely the means of giving Himself. He had need of nothing. Creation does not add to His essential perfection.

God would not be God were He not capable of creating a multiplicity that is possible. Metaphysics pretends to show that such a multiplicity within being is possible. Considering the universe from a static point of view we shall see that, for such a multiplicity of things, the prime necessity is that of a real distinction of essence and existence in the finite. We shall see also that within being there is necessarily a hierarchy of being, and that if we follow down this hierarchy of perfection, a real composition of matter and form imposes itself. This will lead naturally to a dynamic view of creation, and there we shall be in a position to find the ultimate foundation for the metaphysics of finality and the ascent of being to God which such finality necessarily supposes.

(1.) THE HIERARCHY OF CREATION.

It is not necessary to enter into long developments on the many controversies that have risen over the celebrated distinction of essence and existence. That the authentic teaching of St. Thomas implies such a distinction there can be little doubt.² It would not be difficult to show that it forms the corner-stone of his whole metaphysical system, and it will be increasingly evident from the tenor of our whole book that it is really at the basis of his many metaphysical theses. And what more natural?

If the metaphysical thesis of the real distinction alone rationalises the possibility of the finite, it is clear that it must govern his whole metaphysical system. Constantly, St. Thomas recognises within being the fundamental dichotomy of a being that is identically being, and beings

1.—*Sent.*, lib. I, dist. I, Q. II, art. 3.

2.—Cf. M. D. Roland-Gosselin, O.P., *De distinctione inter essentiam et esse apud Avicennam et S. Thomam*—*Xenia Thomistica*, 3 (1925), pp. 281-288; P. Géný, S.J., *La cohérence de la synthèse Thomiste*.—*Ibid.*, pp. 105-125.

that are being only by participation.¹ It is thus St. Thomas expresses the truth that if multiplicity is possible, it is because the unique and entire simplicity coming from the identity of being and essence has given way before the real distinction of essence and existence. This idea of participation is, no doubt, an echo of Plato, but in the hands of St. Thomas it has a new meaning. With him it is impregnated with the idea of causality, and when he seeks a brief proof of God he confines himself simply to saying that a being which is being merely by participation is, but by the causality of another, and that the finite as such, as merely participated being, demands the existence of God.

The principle on which St. Thomas bases his reasoning is that no perfection can limit itself. Being as such is necessarily illimited. Were it not, then because being as being is limited, it would follow that the more limited it is, the more it would be being. Evidently that is absurd. To say being is in function of its limit, which is the negation of being, is to make nothingness, and finally the impossible, the highest form of being. Being as such, wrote St. Thomas, is most perfect.² Compared with all else, it is act, for nothing is actual except in so far as it has being. Hence it imparts actuality to all things and to all forms. It is not to be thought of as something which receives, but as something which is received. Thus it is necessarily distinct from that which receives and which on last analysis limits it.³

1.—Cf. Ia., Q. XIV, art. 4; *Ibid.*, Q. VIII, art. 9; Q. XVI, art. 5; Q. XVIII, art. 3, and 4; Q. XIX, art. 1.

2.—*Ipsium esse est perfectissimum omnium; comparatur enim ad omnia ut actus; nihil enim habet actualitatem, nisi in quantum est. Unde ipsum esse est actualitas omnium rerum et etiam ipsarum formarum. Unde non comparatur ad alia, sicut recipiens ad receptum, sed magis sicut receptum ad recipiens; cum enim dico esse hominis vel equi ipsum esse consideratur ut formale et receptum, non autem ut illud cui competit esse.*—Ia., Q. IV, art. 1, ad 3.

3.—*Nec intelligendum est, quod ei quod dico esse, aliquid addatur quod sit eo formalius, ipsum determinans, sicut actus potentiam: esse enim quod hujusmodi est, est aliud secundum essentiam ab eo cui additur determinandum. Nihil autem potest addi ad esse quod sit extraneum ab ipso, cum ab eo nihil sit extraneum nisi non ens quod non potest esse nec forma nec materia. Unde non sic determinatur esse per aliud sicut potentia per actum, sed magis sicut actus per potentiam.*—*De Pot.*, Q. VII, art. 2, ad 9. Cf. Ia., Q. III, art. 4; *Ibid.*, Q. IV, art. 1, ad 3.

Limit is a negation, a lack : it betrays the presence of potentiality. If the finite, therefore, is possible it is clearly because it is not identical with being, which is, as St. Thomas puts it, of itself most perfect, illimited.¹ The finite is simply a participation in being, for being as such can participate in nothing. Being as act cannot limit itself ; that which limits it is essence ; being is received, and as a co-principle with essence, which is really distinct from it, renders the finite and a multiplicity possible.

The inevitable tendency of the human mind to consolidate concepts into things must not lead us astray here. The essence of the finite must not be regarded as some " thing " with a consistence of its own in *verum natura*. Nor must it be regarded as something, in a sense, eternal, to which existence is superadded. The real distinction appertains to the finite, both as existing and as possible, and any figuring of the proof of this distinction as merely based on the distinction of essence viewed in the abstract and in the concrete must be abandoned. The real distinction is at the heart of the finite as such, and only when intelligence has seized the necessity of two co-principles, mutually complementary, has any approach been made to render the finite intelligible. The beginning of wisdom in metaphysics is the abandoning of imaginative rendering of this distinction which is the key-stone of the whole edifice. The difficulties that arise are, undoubtedly, due to the tendency towards imagining, and to allowing the element of time introduce itself where it has no strict business.

That which limits a being, its essence, distinguishes this particular kind of being from others. But, because essence also is a perfection, if we view it simply as perfection, we shall experience the same difficulty in its regard as we did in regard to being as act or perfection. As perfection, it is really total and entire. Hence if there are beings which participate in this perfection, if there are beings which approach

1.—Esse autem Dei, cum non sit in aliquo receptum, sed sit esse purum, non limitatur ad aliquem modum perfectionis essendi, sed totum esse in se habet, et sic sicut esse in universali acceptum ad infinita se potest extendere, ita divinum esse infinitum est.—*De Pot.*, Q. I, art. 2.

each other within the same species, and thereby also exhibit certain limitations, a certain lack of complete perfection and determination, we are forced to look beyond the essence as such which is perfect in itself. The essence as such is determined in itself, but the fact that it is possessed by many necessarily implies indetermination somewhere. This indetermination cannot come from the essence as form, that which is determined in itself: it must come from an indeterminate element, matter. If many participate in the same essence, clearly it is not in virtue of the essence which is unique, but in virtue of the matter, which is the foundation of the numerical distinction of individuals endowed with the same nature.

St. Thomas who developed these principles in a perfectly logical manner argued, therefore, that essence or form, left to itself, necessarily gave rise to a specific distinction. It was in this way that he denied a purely numerical distinction for pure intelligences and denied to them the composition of matter and form. Each angel, he held, was unto itself a species.¹

The matter and form theory in St. Thomas, therefore, holds the rank of a metaphysical theory. Whatever may be the suggestiveness of cosmological transformations, it is independent of them in its value, as that alone which can explain the laying out of finite beings, as multiplied within the same species, and as subject to the mutable conditions of time, space and change.

From the static view-point, therefore, we see the metaphysical possibility of a hierarchy that descends from God. Because in God there is a perfect identity of essence and of being He is unique and perfect. Because in the finite there is a real distinction of essence and existence a multiplicity of beings is possible. In a word, the finite as such is necessarily deficient.²

1—Ia., Q. L., art. 2.

2.—Nam, Deus in ipso suo esse summam perfectionem obtinet bonitatis; res autem creata suam perfectionem non possidet in uno sed in multis; quod enim est in supremo unitum multiplex in infimis invenitur.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XX. A metaphysical doctrine of evil might easily be inserted here. We refer the reader to the excellent pages of R. P. Sertillanges, *Saint*

Out of this necessary deficiency of the finite arises the inequality which St. Thomas finds in the universe. God, by His absolute perfection, occupies a unique place. As for inferior beings, there is further the differences that he marks between the pure intelligences, in whom there is merely the distinction of essence and existence, and beings of the lower creation that are further characterised by a composition of matter and form.¹ This very multiplicity is eminently calculated to mirror forth the infinite goodness which thus spreads around it the scattered rays of its own simple perfection.² Though an angel, he remarks, is better than a stone, simply speaking, yet both together are better than either; a universe in which there are both angels and other things is better than a universe in which there would be only angels.³

For all that, St. Thomas does not exaggerate the importance of multiplicity as such.⁴ What is important is the order and hierarchy, and especially that necessary analogy which points to a First Analogue. For all being is in a sense one by divine causality. This harmony of multiplicity, despite the distinctness that characterises the finite, is a necessity of being: it is that order of things wherein Dante saw the reflection of God. For this order, what is of importance is, not so much material inequality, but "formal" diversity.⁵ The only difficulty that the saint experienced in this respect arises out of the material multiplication of the human

Thomas d'Aquin, Paris, 4 ième ed., lib. III, chap. 2 B. He epitomises his views thus, p. 323: "Le mal y est présenté, en dernière analyse, comme une conséquence de la descente de l'être dans le multiple, par suite dans l'imparfait, à partir de la Source Première."

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XX.

2.—*Produxit enim res in esse propter suam bonitatem communicandam creaturis et per eas repraesentandum. Et quia per unam creaturam sufficienter representari non potest, produxit multas creaturas et diversas; ut quod deest uni ad repraesentandum divinam bonitatem, suppleatur ex alia.*—Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 1.

3.—*Sent.*, lib. I, dist. XLIV, Q. I, art. 2, ad 1.

4.—Rather, the only question that might arise would be if he did not underestimate the individual. Rousselot viewed the problem in that light.—Cf. *Intellectualisme de Saint Thomas*, 1925, pp. 120 sqq.

5.—Cf. Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 3, ad 2; *De Verit.*, Q. XXIX, art. 3, ad 3; IIIa., Q. I, art. 3, ad 3.

individual which requires the immediate creation of the soul.¹ Whatever may have been the difficulties of detail that the saint experienced in mapping out the universe, his metaphysic at least indicates the broad outlines on which it was possible. Above all, it is seen that the finite as such is not self-explicative. We cannot explain its essence without having recourse to its existence, nor its existence without applying to its essence. If we admit that taking the finite as it is, we can render an intelligible account of it by seeking its essence, yet as being, within being and as belonging to the metaphysical order, the finite necessarily implies a relation to God, as alone capable of realising it.² The finite, metaphysically considered, is just the being that is possible in itself, but not by itself, since its essence does not necessarily imply its existence.

This is what may well be called the paradox of the finite: that if it is, its *raison d'être* is outside it. That, in its turn, leads to other paradoxes not less striking. For as finite, created things participate in being; and being as such is illimited. Inevitably, as being, the finite will present certain illimited aspects. A little reflection on this paradox of the finite would have held back the many minds that rushed into the optimism of a best world for God. It is just one of the illimited aspects of things that the number of finite "ensembles" is infinite. This being so, it is not difficult to see that the best possible world is quite impossible: there is no room in metaphysics for an absolute optimism of this kind.³

If, as St. Thomas says, we view the universe in relation to possible worlds, it certainly is not best: the absolutely best world is impossible. If we take the universe as it, it is best,

1.—Cf. Ia., Q. LXXIII, art. 1, ad 3; *Sent.*, lib. 2, dist. 15, Q. III, art. 1, ad 7.

2.—*Licet causa prima, quae Deus est, non intret essentiam rerum creaturarum; tamen esse, quod rebus inest, non potest intelligi nisi ut deductum ab esse divino; sicut nec proprius effectus potest intelligi nisi ut deductus a causa propria.*—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 5, ad 1.

3.—*Circa debitum causae finalis erraverunt, sicut Plato ejus sequaces. Posuit enim quod bonitati Dei ab eo intellectae et amatae debitum esse tale universum producere, ut sic optimus optimum produceret. Quod quidem potest esse verum . . . non autem si respiciamus ad ea quae esse possunt.*—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 16.

because for man the divine Will is the ultimate norm of value, and, further, it is inconceivable that a universe could be ordained to a higher end than that to which the existing world is ordered.¹ "Whatever is, is best," in this sense. When we read the many texts wherein St. Thomas speaks of the perfection of the universe we must not be deceived. He saw clearly the impossibility of absolute optimism. The initial liberty which was at the source of all was of itself sufficient to preclude for him such an error.

His attitude in this respect seems to be that of the spectator before whose gaze the universe unfolds its harmony and order. Granted that God wished to produce such and such a universe the Saint is conscious that certain metaphysical principles are necessarily to be observed.² Yet, it is just possible that St. Thomas in his attempts to appraise the present order of things seems to go beyond the minimum that a metaphysical necessity could impose. The truth is that while distinguishing in theory the formal objects of the sciences St. Thomas also felt that tendency of his age to dictate the laws of the physical universe. There was a situation then not so unlike what we have witnessed in the latter half of the nineteenth century, when, from another angle, scientists would construct the edifice of knowledge with purely mechanical models. In reality, that which has to be discarded is a cosmological minimum that was bound up with a certain physical view of the universe common in the Saint's day.

When this has been left aside, the Thomistic view of universe stands out clear and limpid. We see the hierarchy of being with God as Source. There is a certain descent from God: things diminish in perfection and being-value as

1.—Ut sic optimus optimum produceret. Quod quidem potest esse verum si solum quantum ad ea quae sunt respiciamus.—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 16. Cf. *Sent.*, lib. I, dist., 44, Q. I, art. 1 and 2.

2.—Quod enim Deus tale universum constituere voluerit, non est necessarium neque debitum, neque ex fine, neque ex potentia efficientis, neque materiae, ut ostensum est. Sed supposito quod tale universum producere voluerit, necessarium fuit quod tales et tales creaturas produderit ex quibus talis forma universi consurgeret.—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 16.

they are distant from Him. Dante well expressed the divine "lively light"—

Mirror'd as't were in new existences
 Itself unalterable and ever one
 Descending hence into lowest powers
 Its energy so sinks, at last it makes
 But brief contingencies.

The union of matter and form still reflects goodness and light, but there are "brief contingencies" as Dante puts it, because matter is never more itself than when not itself: it is the indeterminate that is essentially determinable and condemned never to exist as such.

This harmony of being, lightsome and shadowed, is not without a certain compenetration. There is no grade of being so high that it does not contain the lower, and there is nothing so low that it does not somehow reflect the higher: *Deus tota in totis congregat*.¹

(2.) METAPHYSICS OF FINALITY.

If, for a moment, we may regard the universe in the static hierarchy of being, clearly in such a universe there is an appeal, necessary and imperative, for the possibility of progress. The real distinction of essence and existence marks its metaphysical character of potentiality. Not present to itself in that perfect self-possession, which characterises the identity of essence and being, it is imperfect: metaphysically considered it is to be represented by the formula of the imperfect—Becoming.

The Thomistic universe is not something petrified in the immobility of a "statical state." The finite by its very nature implies the possibility of becoming. It participates in being, the perfect, and it has imbibed from it its aspiration towards perfection. There is at the heart of all finite being

1.—Cf. Ia., Q. CX, art. 3; C.G., lib. II, cap. XLVI; *De Div. Nom.*, cap. IV, lect. 5.

a desire and tendency towards the fullness of its being.¹ It is endowed with a dynamic principle that takes it beyond its present state of imperfection. As a whole, or in miniature, the universe is full of a divine discontent.

It is thus that the metaphysical necessity of accident, and of accidental powers of operation inserts itself into the very concept of the finite. As being is, so does it act. The finite is, but not in virtue of its own essence, and hence if the essence is the ultimate principle of its activity it cannot be the immediate principle. Its existence does not result immediately from its essence, and likewise its activity is not essential nor substantial: it demands the more immediate source of accidental principles.²

Such a reasoning may at first appear subtle, yet its importance is fundamental. While St. Thomas, keeping to the metaphysical universe of discourse, claims for the finite the possibility of action, he does not go so far as to make this dynamism part of the essence of the finite as such. He avoids an absolute dynamism and refrains from attributing to the finite in the domain of action what it has not in the domain of being. While he may envisage the finite as a whole in the light of a fundamental formula of becoming, this does not obscure for him the question of detail: the finite for the very same reason that it claims the possibility of becoming denies to itself a becoming and an action that

1.—Unumquodque autem, si perfectione propria careat, in ipsum movetur, quantum in se est; si vero eam habeat, in ipsa quiescit. Finis igitur uniuscujusque rei est ejus perfectio.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XVI. Unaquaeque res naturaliter appetit perfectionem sui.—*Metaph.*, lib. I, lect. 1. Ipsa natura uniuscujusque est quaedam inclinatio indita ei a primo movente, ordinans ipsam in debitum finem.—*Metaph.*, lib. XII, lect. 12.

2.—Nec in angelo, nec in aliqua creatura, virtus vel potentia operativa est idem quod sua essentia. Quod sic patet. Cum enim potentia dicatur ad actum, oportet quod secundum diversitatem actuum sit diversitas potentiarum . . . In omni autem creato essentia differt ab ejus esse, et comparatur ad ipsum sicut potentia ad actum. Actus autem ad quem comparatur potentia operativa, est operatio. In angelo autem non est idem intelligere et esse . . . Unde essentia angeli non est ejus potentia intellectiva, nec alicujus creati essentia est ejus operativa potentia.—Ia., Q. LIV, art. 3. Cf. Ia., Q. LXXVII, art. 1; *De Anima*, Q. Unica, art. 12; C.G., lib. III, cap. LXXIV; *De Malo*, Q. IV, art. 4, ad 3; *De Vert.*, Q. II, art. 14; *Sent.*, dist. 3, Q. IV, art. 2.

would proceed immediately from its essence. As finite it is not as such active : what it claims as its metaphysical right is the *possibility* of progress.

This tendency that characterises the finite will assume different modalities according to the nature whence it proceeds;¹ if the nature is not the immediate principle of operation, it is the ultimate one. At the lowest extreme is the merest inclination and tendency;² St. Thomas does not refrain from portraying matter as a pure tendency to its connatural form.³ Indeed, as we descend the scale of being, this tendency of nature becomes more and more vehement, more predominant.⁴ God, in the possession of all perfection, does not strictly speaking tend. Those natures that approach nearest Him are proportionately self-contained. At least in them the tendency of nature is not supreme : another element enters in. It is in the lowest beings that the urge of being apparently dominates ; the secret force that seeks perfection is stronger than they are ; it is as if with increase in imperfection the desire of perfection is all the greater.

We must not be deceived by this attribution of tendency to the inanimate. St. Thomas was not guilty of the merest anthropomorphism, except in so far as human knowledge is necessarily anthropomorphic. This tendency which he finds in the lower orders is not the merest projection of a will in miniature, but it is an analogical rendering of the impetus to perfection. The Thomistic account of finality is not to be confounded with the Voluntarism of Schopenhauer. If the Saint marks this predominance of tendency from a certain aspect, he is far from attributing to it a metaphysical primacy. On last analysis intelligence rules the destinies of the

1.—Quaedam inclinantur in bonum per solam naturalem habitudinem, absque cognitione sicut plantae et corpora inanimata : et talis inclinatio ad bonum vocatur appetitus *naturalis* ; quaedam vero ad bonum inclinantur cum aliqua cognitione.—Ia., Q. LIX, art. 1.

2.—Appetere nihil aliud est quam aliquid petere, quasi tendere in aliquodi ad ipsum ordinatum.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1.

3.—Unaquaeque res naturaliter appetit perfectionem sui, unde et materia dicitur appetere formam sicut imperfectum appetit suam perfectionem.—*Metaph.*, lib. I, lect. 1.

4.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 4.

unconscious impulse of the lower orders.¹

Nor was this brought about by the merest appeal to something entirely extrinsic. The beauty of his theory, as indeed that of Aristotle himself, was that he found an intelligible account of becoming. The manner in which they envisaged the unity of matter and form gave them both their superiority over philosophers of the Platonic tradition, as well as over philosophers who attribute a primacy to unconscious impulses, as in the case of Schopenhauer.

Both aspects of the metaphysics of finality, what we may call its transcendental aspect, that is, the finite related to the divine Intelligence, and the more immediate aspect which arises out of the intelligible unity of matter and form, are necessarily to be borne in mind. M. Bergson's attempt to escape from both finalism and mechanism will be seen to ignore the transcendental aspect. "The mechanistic philosophy," he says, "is to be taken or left: it must be left if the least grain of dust, by straying from the path foreseen by mechanics, should show the slightest trace of spontaneity".² Radical finalism he finds equally distasteful, since it implies "that things and beings merely realise a programme previously arranged. But if there is nothing unforeseen, no invention or creation in the universe, time is useless again. As in the mechanist hypothesis here again it is supposed all is given. Finalism thus understood is only inverted mechanism".³ It is not necessary here to give a detailed account of M. Bergson's whole system, except to recall his view of reality as perpetual flux incapable of intellectual representation. If future forms could be foreseen in a pre-conceived plan, there is no use, M. Bergson believes, for time: there are no new forms for it to create, for though the execution of these may be put off indefinitely to a future date, yet "the idea is none the less formulable at the present

1.—*Amor naturalis, qui est in omnibus rebus, causatur ex aliqua cognitione, non quidem in ipsis rebus naturalibus existente, sed in eo qui naturam instituit.*—*Ia-IIae.*, Q. XXVII, art. 2, ad 3. Cf. *Ibid.*, Q. XXVI, art. 1; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1.

2.—H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 42.

3.—*Ibid.*, p. 41.

time in terms actually given ".¹ But it is this precisely we question: M. Bergson's error is not far to seek. We are not aware that the Thomistic account of finalism implies that the *human* intellect could pretend of itself to seize the complete finality of all created being; on the contrary, we have seen, that all it can attain is that there must be a view-point whence all is intelligible. For M. Bergson "radical finalism" implies that it is the final plane determines all, just as in the mechanical view the determining influence lies in the initial plane. But this is a singularly myopic view of things. The ultimate view-point whence all is intelligible is neither the initial nor the ultimate plane of things: it is transcendental in regard to both. By so viewing both mechanism and finalism, M. Bergson implies that this ultimate view-point is itself in time: he implicitly asserts that all reality is in time, and that is to make of time a meaningless delusion, since time implies a reference to a purpose, an end not yet attained. If finality, therefore, is to be metaphysically established we must have recourse to God with whom lies the purpose of reality, a purpose which as such is not in time.²

The more immediate aspect of finality illustrates the metaphysical value of the matter and form theory. The old objection of Aristotle against Platonic ideas as "separate" tends to become banal, but its importance is enormous. When it is a question of the metaphysics of desire and of becoming it is entirely primordial. M. R. Arnou has suggested that neither in Plato nor in Plotinus an intelligible unity for movement had been found. By a neat comparison he has shown that Plotinus has scarcely gone beyond Plato's myth.³ And because no clear exposition of a synthesis of what for us corresponds to matter and form was achieved, it is doubtful whether an intelligible unity has been found, and because there is no unity, naturally there is no intelligible account of finality.

1.—*Ibid.*, p. 108.

2.—See interesting article of Dr. Alfred O'Rahilly, *The Meaning of Evolution*.—*Studies*, (1912), p. 50.

3.—R. Arnou, *Le désir de Dieu chez Plotin*, Paris, 1921, p. 70.

Aristotle, by rising to a conception of matter and form as two complementary principles *ut quo*, found the intelligible unity for becoming. Matter by its union with form separates, as it were, form from itself, thereby placing a distance between the form as realised and its ideal perfection. In this way the form is principle of movement in so far as it is also the end to be attained, the particular essence to be realised, for the form of the individual and the particular end to be realised are one and the same thing.¹

Whether we view finality, therefore, in its transcendental or in the more immediate aspect, there is no undue predominance of tendency as such : it is saved for intelligibility. In reality, there is a simple way of viewing the matter, which is none the less metaphysical. St. Thomas frequently recurs to it. For if there is a tendency it is clear that it must be in some direction.² The source of this tendency as being is necessarily intelligible. Deriving from such a source, its action, which also appertains to being, is also necessarily intelligible. It is determined, we have seen, by the form, and form is that which renders matter intelligible.³

Finality, therefore, in the Thomistic metaphysic is a necessity of being as such. Just as, statically considered, it was the real distinction of essence and existence rationalised the possibility of multiplicity, so from a dynamic view-point, finality is that which renders multiplicity possible by an intelligible reduction to unity.⁴ Multiplicity cannot be immediately one without denying itself as multiplicity. If it is to be reduced to unity we must have recourse to causality.

1.—Cf. M. A. Mansion, *Introduction à la physique aristotélicienne*, Louvain, pp. 147-149.

2.—In his enim quae manifeste propter finem agunt, hoc dicimus finem *in quod tendit* impetus agentis . . . Nec differt, quantum ad hoc, utrum quod tendit in finem sit cognoscens vel non . . . Omnis autem agentis impetus *ad aliquid certum tendit* . . . Et si quidem actio terminatur ad aliquod factum impetus agentis per actionem tendit in illud factum, si autem; non terminatur ad aliquod factum impetus agentis tendit in ipsam actionem. C.G., lib. III, cap. II.

3.—Quamlibet formam sequitur aliqua inclinatio.—Ia., Q. LXXX, art. 1.

4.—Haec est ratio, quare mundus est unus, quia debent omnia esse ordinata uno ordine et ad unum; propter quod Aristoteles (XII Met., text 52) ex unitate ordinis in rebus existentis concludit unitatem Dei gubernantis.—Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 3, ad 1 and ad 3.

As being is intelligible only in virtue of a possible reduction to unity, so multiplicity can be rendered intelligible only by that causality which unifies it: a multiplicity that would be only multiplicity would be a contradiction: as multiplicity, at least, it must have unity, if it is to have being at all.

This causality is primarily that of the final cause. The final cause, said St. Thomas, is the "*causa causarum*"; it renders intelligible the other three causes. By so doing, it imparts to multiplicity also its intelligibility. Finality is but the dynamic aspect of the finite which corresponds to the essential distinction of essence and existence. It would view this distinction as one of potency and act. And just as within being there is the fundamental dichotomy of being which is identically being or act and being which is composed of potency and act, so we may say that within being there is merely place for a being which is an End, and beings that are finalised. Efficiency and finality are thus seen to be analytically connected: we cannot know God as first efficient cause, says St. Thomas, without knowing that He is the Final End.

It would be an error, however, to conceive a demonstration of finality as starting merely from the relative and contingent order of things and inferring that the universe as the work of an all-wise ruler will naturally display such an order. Many such presentations of finality, ever since Kant expressed his admiration for the starry heavens above him, or since Paley launched the celebrated "clock-argument," are current. Such recourse to the contingent order of things has, undoubtedly, a value—but it is not a metaphysical one.

In the first place, there is a certain neglect of the metaphysical view-point which considers things not merely as actual, but as being, that is, in their necessary aspects. Finality, if it is necessarily connected with being, is also necessarily connected with truth. In the simplest affirmation of being I affirm a necessary finality, since I affirm that experience is intelligible, for being as such is that which is necessarily intelligible. We have not to go beyond the very

judgement itself to see the necessity of finality. But what is even more striking in this recourse to the empirical order of things is the implicit assumption of such a view. It supposes chaos possible and a fundamental disorder of things. But if chaos, as is supposed, is possible, then reason cannot say that it is impossible, and experience cannot go back far enough, since by hypothesis it is question of a chaos which precedes all experience.

This appeal to the relative order of things and the subsequent founding of finality by an appeal to the divine will is not satisfying metaphysically. There is something loose about it : it is not intrinsic enough. On the contrary, what the metaphysician seeks is an argument that renders finality so necessary that to deny it would be at the cost of a contradiction. Such an argument, may be derived from the very "intrinsicism" of being itself. For as being is being, and outside of being there is nothing, it follows that the concept of an isolated being within being is absurd ; all being is necessarily related. Again, being as being is necessarily true, hence every participation of being is necessarily related to truth and, therefore, intelligible. To entertain the idea of absolute or metaphysical chaos, of which alone there is question here, would be just the same as supposing being that would not be being, that would not be related to truth, that would be unintelligible and unthinkable. Such a supposition is absurd. So that in this way the metaphysician sees in a decisive and intrinsic manner that order is a necessity of being.

Such is the argument for finality required by the metaphysical principles of St. Thomas, who had always emphasised the knowability of being and its necessary relation to intelligence.¹ Clearly, such a position is not so *naïf* as some modern adversaries of finality would have us believe. In reality, by the time that final causes began to be scoffed at, the metaphysical foundation of intrinsic finality had lapsed from consciousness.

1.—C.G., lib. II, cap. XCVIII.

It follows that the idea of chance, so frequently invoked against finality, is infra-metaphysical. The poetic imagination of a Tennyson may have been impressed when he—

. . . . saw the flaring atom-streams
And torrents of her myriad universe
Running along the illimitable inane
Fly on to clash together again, and make
Another and another frame of things
For ever.

But the mind of the metaphysician is left cold by such suppositions. Since finality is a necessity of being as such, and order a necessary character of being, the case for final causes is neither strengthened nor weakened by consideration of the apparent order or disorder of things. The apparent exceptions to constant recurrences or to what John Stuart Mill would call "periodicities of phenomena" that occur in the sphere of the relative do not disturb him, for the simple reason that on the metaphysical plane there can be no exception. In particular that aspect of the finite which makes it totally dependent on God is assuredly beyond the sphere of variation, and whatever may be the apparent abrogations of laws of nature, metaphysically they are within the reign of a higher law or uniformity. Because the finite is totally dependent on the Infinite, the apparent chance and exceptions are simply the art we do not see, and the finality of being is assured by this very relation that seemed to question it.

We cannot disguise from ourselves, however, that St. Thomas sometimes appeals to the constant recurrence of events "ut in pluribus" as opposed to the inconstant "ut in paucis" to prove apparently that there is order in the universe. There is as it were a parallel series of texts, one of which gives the intrinsic foundation of finality, the other which is merely of a certain cosmological value, and has the appearance of a merely empirical finding. It is to be remarked that almost invariably when it is a question of this merely empirical view of order, St. Thomas is quoting Aristotle, particularly his refutation of pre-Socratics. If the

effects that take place in nature, argued Aristotle, followed so necessarily from the sum of preceding causes that natural causes were not predisposed to certain connatural effects, then it would follow that such connatural and useful effects, if not in some way intended, would be due simply to chance. But if due to chance, then they would not occur, as is seen to happen, in a majority of cases.¹ Not infrequently St. Thomas appeals to such an argument.²

Nor would it be impossible to find examples of that extrinsic foundation of finality which consists in the proof of God's existence and then depends on the divine will to establish a divine providence. The fact is that St. Thomas was constrained to employ such arguments because of the historical circumstances in which he found himself. He is merely unjust to himself in not distinguishing as markedly as we should desire the different points of view. It is certain that he laid down the intrinsic foundation of finality. He also rose above the concept of chance to integrate the finite as being within the metaphysical order, which he calls the universal order, that is, the finite in its relation to God. To this order he recognised no exception.³ Within being, from the metaphysical view-point, all comes within the reign of law and harmony.⁴

1.—He is quoting Aristotle's refutation of his predecessors, those "qui posuerunt effectus advenientes in natura, ex necessitate praecedentium causarum provenire; non ita quod causae naturales essent hoc modo dispositae propter convenientiam talium effectuum: quod Philosophus in II Physic. (text. 75 et 87 et seq.) ex hoc improbat quod secundum hoc, hujusmodi convenientiae et utilitates, si non essent aliquo modo intentae, casu provenirent, et sic non acciderent in majori parte sed in minori, sicut et caetera quae casu accidere dicimus; unde necesse est dicere quod omnes res naturales sunt ordinatae et dispositae ad suos effectus convenientes.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1.

2.—Illi qui ponebant omnia accidere casu, non poterant ideam ponere. Sed haec opinio a philosophis reprobatur, quia quae sunt a casu, non se habent eodem modo nisi ut in paucioribus; naturae autem cursum videmus semper eodem modo progredi, aut in pluribus.—*De Verit.*, Q. III, art. 1.

3.—Effectus accidentales in istis inferioribus possunt considerari dupliciter: uno modo in ordine ad causas proximas; et sic multa casu eveniunt; alio modo in ordine ad causam primam; et sic nihil casu accidet in mundo.—*De Verit.*, Q. V, art. 4, ad 7. Potest enim aliquid fieri extra ordinem alicujus causae particularis agentis, non autem extra ordinem causae universalis, sub qua omnes causae particulares comprehenduntur.—*Ia.*, Q. XIX, art. 6; *Ibid.*, Q. XXII, art. 2, ad 1, ad 4.

4.—It would not be difficult to deduce a theory of miracles from the foregoing metaphysical considerations. It would be seen how in the Thomistic

In effect, it is just when one is about to imagine that St. Thomas is least metaphysical, that a broader view shows that he has the metaphysical interest at heart. In particular, he had no intention of making all depend exclusively on the Will of God. On the contrary, his aim was to show, especially in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, that order depends not only on the Will, but also on the Wisdom of God.¹

He was arguing against adversaries who would make all depend exclusively on God's Will. Musulman philosophers had so exaggerated this view-point that they denied to things a nature of their own. M. E. Gilson has shown that this opinion is to be linked up with another system which denies to finite things any activity of their own.² From a comparison with Maimonides³ we find that such a doctrine was held by the sect of the Ashariyah among the Arabs, who said that nothing happens by accident in this world, but that all depends immediately on the pure Will of God.⁴

system miracles, if they signify exceptions within the order of the relative, illustrate a higher law, that, namely, of metaphysical dependence of the finite on the Absolute, God, who is transcendent in regard to the relations of contingency that are to be found on the plane of the relative. See A. Van Hove, *La doctrine du miracle chez saint Thomas*, Bruges, Paris, 1927, pp. 120-121.

1.—Excluditur error quorundam dicentium omnia procedere a Deo secundum simplicem voluntatem: ut de nullo oporteat rationem reddere nisi quia Deus vult.—C.G., lib. I, cap. LXXXVII. Per hoc autem excluditur quorundam error qui dicebant omnia ex simplici voluntate dependere, absque aliqua ratione.—C.G., lib. II, cap. XXIV. Cf. lib. II, cap. XXVIII-XXIX.

2.—E. Gilson, *Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin*.—*Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, Paris, 2 (1926), pp. 10 sqq.

3.—Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, part I, ch. 73, prop. 6.

4.—Sic igitur, per praemissa, duplex error excluditur: eorum scilicet qui credunt quod omnia simplicem voluntatem sequantur absque ratione; qui est error loquentium in lege Sarracenorum, ut Kabbi Moyses dicit: secundum quod nulla differentia est quod ignis calefaciat et infrigidet, nisi quia Deus ita vult.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XCVII. Ex hoc autem quidam occasionem errandi sumpserunt, putantes quod nulla creatura habet aliquam actionem in productione effectuum naturalium, ita scilicet quod ignis non calefacit, sed Deus causat calorem presente igno. Et similiter dicunt in omnibus aliis effectibus naturalibus. . . . Quidam etiam loquentes in lege Maurorum dicuntur ad hoc rationem inducere, quod etiam accidentia non sint ex actione corporum, quia accidens non transit a subjecto in subjectum: unde reputant impossibile quod calor transeat a corpore calido in aliud corpus ab ipso calefactum, sed dicunt omnia hujusmodi accidentia creari a Deo.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LXIX.

This throws a singularly clear light on St. Thomas' pre-occupation with chance and accident, and indicates also that he undertook such polemics in the interests of metaphysical finality. It is just the peculiar consequence of this doctrine, that by so denying chance or accident, it also denied the necessity of final causes: if all derives immediately from God then neither chance nor accident could have any meaning.

In addition, there were certain adversaries who denied created essences, and so denied all efficiency to created being. In themselves these different opinions are not systematised. It is possible that these last mentioned also denied finality. It is not known. Nowhere do we find these different opinions unified or coordinated. It is precisely the metaphysical perspicacity of St. Thomas that unites them together to reject them *en bloc* in virtue of a unique fundamental principle, that of intrinsic finality. While Maimonides saw the origin of their common error in their opinion as to the creation of the world in time,¹ St. Thomas rather sought it in the denial of nature to finite being and the consequent rejection of finality.²

To be convinced of this we have but to notice the *rapprochement* that the Saint makes between the finality of being and the transcendental attribute of goodness.³ It is there we may hope to see the metaphysic of finality worked out in detail. It introduces us to the ultimate formula of all finality.

1.—E. Gilson, *loc. cit.*, p. 18.

2.—Sic igitur ex fine sumitur ratio diversitatis formarum in rebus; ex diversitate autem formarum sumitur ratio ordinis in rebus.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XCVII.

3.—Cf. C.G., lib. III, caps. LXXV, LXXVI, LXXVII.

(3.) THE LAW OF DESIRE: *ASSIMILARI DEO*.

In the metaphysical order efficiency is intelligible only in function of finality.¹ Whatever may be the accidents or chances that occur within the order of the relative, where the causality of finite causes meet with obstacles that seem to frustrate the intentions of nature, there is no exception that is not reducible to a law of ultimate dependence on the Source of all being. Within being, we have said, either being is an end in itself and for itself, or being is finalised. And when we have found in God the source of being, we have necessarily found the end towards which being tends, and *vice versa*, God could not be the end of all without being source and principle.²

No matter where we start, once we envisage being as such, we must go to God: He is the exclusive cause of being, as being. In a certain sense, we may say that the natural progress of human thought is towards God as the end of all activity. Thought requires that activity be directed towards some end; the necessity for finality is, perhaps, more striking if we consider activity as it reveals itself to us. And Aristotle naturally concluded to a God who moved the universe by desire, even when it is not so clear that he found in God the efficient cause of all being.

The finite is that which merely participates in being, that which is absent from the fullness of being. For it, its very tendency to remain in being is tantamount to a tendency to greater being. If it tends, it must tend towards something definite: it is inconceivable that if it tends it does not tend somewhere. If it acts, therefore, it must be for an end.³ Now the end towards which it tends is necessarily its perfection, its good: it is itself as completed.⁴

1.—Cf. *Post. Anal.*, lib. I, lect. 13; *Sent.*, *dist.* 3, Q. I, art. 1, vol. I; *Metaph.*, lib. V, lect. 3.

2.—C.G., lib. I, cap. XXXVII.

3.—Si agens non tenderet ad aliquem effectum determinatum, omnes effectus essent ei indifferentes.—C.G., lib. III, cap. II. Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. I, art. 2.

4.—Cum enim ratio boni in hoc consistit quod aliquid sit perfectivum alterius per modum finis.—*De Veritate*, Q. XXI, art. 2. Illud ad quod

This reveals the immediate connection between metaphysical finality and the concept of goodness. But the very idea of goodness, by its very implication of perfection, hurries us on to a goodness which is perfection itself. That very goodness which is within the grasp of the finite is but a participation ; it is not self-explicative. If it is, it must be in virtue of something that is not a mere participation, but Goodness itself, transcendent and identical with Being. If it is sought, it cannot be merely for itself : it has not within it the force to attract even the activity of finite beings. However we view the perfection that lies within the way of the finite, whether from view-point of finality or efficiency, we are forced to look beyond it to its source—God. And so we are also forced to look beyond the activity of the finite for its ultimate motive and moving principle.

This necessity of God, the sovereign and ultimate good, as the sole adequate moving force of finite being we can view in many ways. The perfection and goodness that are obtainable by the finite are but the effects of God. They are good in virtue of that resemblance which, as effects, they enjoy.¹ Of themselves they are incapable of action, either efficient or final, unless they are upheld by that transcendental causality on which they depend totally.² The same tendency that impels the finite towards its perfection impels it towards the Cause of that participated good in which the reflection of the divine attractiveness shines out. Everything tends towards the good ;³ everything imperfect is in search of its perfection.⁴ But God is source of all there is, hence of all the participated good there is : as source of all goodness He is

aliquid tendit quum extra ipsum fuerit, et in quo quiescit quum ipsum habuerit, est finis ejus. Unumquodque autem, si perfectione propria careat, in ipsam movetur, quantum in se est ; si vero eam habeat in ipsa quiescit. Finis igitur uniuscujusque rei est ejus perfectio. Perfectio autem cujuslibet est bonum ipsius. Unumquodque igitur ordinatur in bonum sicut in finem.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XVI.

1.—Cf. *De Div. Nom.*, cap. IV, lects. 1 and 2.

2.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LXXIX.

3.—In appetitu autem naturali principium hujusmodi motus est con-naturalitas appetentis ad id in quod tendit quae dici potest amor naturalis.—Ia-IIae., Q. XXVI, art. 1. Cf. C.G., lib. III, caps. CXCv, XCVI.

4.—Omne autem imperfectum tendit in perfectum.—Ia-IIae., Q. XVI, art. 4.

Goodness itself, the Sovereign Good.¹ As First Cause of all, He is necessarily Final end, the extrinsic end towards which the finite by its very nature tends.²

A simple consideration removes the apparent distance that the necessities of human language implies when we say that God is the extrinsic end of all, or that He is, as Tennyson put it, the "far-off divine event." In every causality God is more properly cause than the secondary cause themselves. Not that we are to consider the cooperation of the Transcendent Cause with the finite as that wherein the finite supplies its part and God His part to the common result. Clearly, we are not to conceive of God as so descending into the sphere of the relative to cooperate in the narrow sense of cooperation as we understand it of finite things.³ The finite effect, remarks St. Thomas, is caused entirely by each under different aspects; by God as First Being, source of all being; by the created agent as by a dependent cause and particular agent of such and such effect. It is God who makes causality possible, and since the causality of the final cause is that of desire or tendency, it follows that if the finite good is sought it is in virtue of the Infinite, and it is God

1.—Cum ergo Deus sit prima causa effectiva omnium, manifestum est quod ei competit ratio boni et appetibilis.—Ia., Q. VI, art. 1. Deus est summum bonum simpliciter.—*Ibid.*, art. 2.

2.—Diversimodo se habet ad bonitatem Deus et creaturae, secundum duplicem modum bonitatis quae in creaturis potest considerari. Cum enim bonum habeat rationem perfectionis et finis, secundum duplicem perfectionem et finem creaturae attenditur duplex ejus bonitas. Attenditur enim quaedam creaturae perfectio secundum quod in sua natura persistit; et haec est finis generationis aut factionis ejus. Alia vero perfectio ipsius attenditur quam consequitur per suum motum vel operationem; et haec est finis motus vel operationis ipsius. Secundum utramque vero creatura deficit a bonitate divina: nam cum forma et esse rei sit bonum et perfectio ipsius secundum quod in sua natura consideratur, substantia composita neque est sua forma, neque suum esse; substantia vero simplex creata etsi sit ipsa forma, non tamen est suum esse. Deus vero est sua essentia et suum esse, ut supra. Similiter omnes creaturae consequuntur perfectam bonitatem ex fine extrinseco. Perfectio enim bonitatis consistit in adeptione finis ultimi. Finis autem ultimus cujuslibet creaturae est extra ipsam, qui est divina bonitas, quae quidem non ordinatur ad ultimam finem.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIX.

3.—Patet autem quod, non sic idem effectus causae naturali et divinae virtuti attribuitur, quasi partim a Deo, partim a naturali agente fiat, sed totus ab utroque secundum alium modum; sicut idem effectus totus attribuitur instrumento et principali agenti etiam totus.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LXX.

that is more really sought after than the proximate end itself.¹

From this follows the striking and beautiful thesis of St. Thomas that all being, no matter what its position in the scale of perfection, loves God above all things.² He thus marks the true object of that love of all creation which is but a name for the dynamic pulse and throb of its inmost being.³ God is, as it were, the anonymous object of all desire. But His is a privileged position. He is the First-desired of all creation.⁴ To say that the finite tends at all is to say that it tends primarily towards God;⁵ and if it seeks a proximate perfection it is only as an instalment: the ultimate and compelling object of its desire is first and above all God.⁶

Such is the intrinsic proof of this interesting thesis of St. Thomas. It is not necessary to delay over the other considerations which he employs,⁷ save to indicate that they

1.—Sed Deus est prima causa in ordine causarum finalium, quum sit summum in ordine bonorum. Est igitur magis finis uniuscujusque rei quam aliquis finis proximus.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XVII.

2.—Diligere autem Deum super omnia est quiddam connaturale homini, et etiam cuilibet creaturae, non solum rationali sed irrationali, et etiam inanimatae, secundum modum amoris qui unicuique competere potest.—Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 3. For man, St. Thomas proves his thesis expressly in *Quodlibet*. I, art. 8; also Ia., Q. LX, art. 5; Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 3. It is to be noted, however, that in the present order of fallen nature he says: In statu naturae corruptae indiget homo etiam ad hoc auxilio gratiae.—Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 3. R. P. Hérís, O.P., in his interesting study, *L'amour naturel de Dieu d'après S. Thomas—Mélanges thomistes*, pp. 289 sqq., regrets that a direct and positive proof is not clearly enunciated by St. Thomas. "Mais quand il s'agit d'en formuler une preuve positive et directe, on s'étonne au premier abord de ne découvrir qu'une simple ébauche: il est d'expérience commune, nous dira le saint Docteur, que ce qui est partie d'un tout tend naturellement à agir pour le bien du tout," p. 291. From what has preceded it seems to be clear that the proof of St. Thomas is direct and positive, and leaves nothing to be desired. Otherwise, we have nothing but praise for the article of P. Hérís, who naturally, once he found an apparent absence of a direct and positive proof, was forced to make the most of what was left; that he has succeeded in accomplishing.

3.—Ia., Q. LX, art. I, and ad 3.

4.—Deus igitur cum sit primum movens immobile est primum desideratum.—C.G., lib. I, cap. XXXVII.

5.—Propter hoc igitur (unumquodque) tendit in proprium bonum quia tendit in divinam similitudinem et non e converso. Unde patet quod omnia appetunt divinam similitudinem quasi ultimum finem.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXIV.

6.—*Sent.*, lib. II, dist. I, Q. II, art. 2.

7.—The reader will find them in the article of R. P. Hérís, O.P., already cited.

are drawn principally from the subordination of the parts of the universe to the whole and from the consideration of things as realisations of the divine plan. The part being for the whole, it naturally loves the whole more than itself.¹ On last analysis the whole is the likeness of God which is manifested in the universe ; in other words it is God Himself who is the common good, and to which the universe is ordained. As realisation of the divine plan the universe supposes, not merely the order among the parts, but of the whole to the common end, that willed by God Himself.²

That this priority of the divine is not something which claims its value immediately for consciousness will be evident from what has preceded : the fundamental search for God is not necessarily something explicit. It is really the Thomistic solution of the metaphysical problem of the return of being to its Source. As such, only a metaphysical reflection on the exigencies of being could have revealed the dynamism we have indicated. The value of such reflection is that it gives us the deepest aspiration of the finite, and at the same time marks the true order of values. While it reveals that metaphysically God is the first desired and most vehemently sought after, it admits that on the immediate horizon it is the finite's own perfection that appears. At the same time it also shows that even this immediate perfection is desired because of its tendency to God : did the creature not first desire God in the sense indicated, it could desire nought else.

But there is really a point of fundamental importance for the most modern mind which may be surmised already. The desire of God, alone, renders possible the tendency of the finite towards its perfection. Now it is only a slight step from that to seeing that the fundamental tendency of the finite as such is to acquire God for itself, by acquiring that

1.—*Naturali appetitu vel amore unaquaeque res particularis amat bonum proprium suum propter bonum commune totius universi quod est Deus.*—*Ia-IIae.*, Q. CIX, art. 3. Cf. *C.G.*, lib. III, caps. XVII, XIX, XX, XXI ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1, art. 2 ; *Sent.*, lib. IV, dist. 49, Q. I, art. 2, sol. 1, art. 3, sol. 4.

2.—*C.G.*, lib. III, caps. LXXVII, LXXVIII.

perfection which is merely a reflection of the Perfect. This supposes, for St. Thomas, the subsisting divine reality, God. For him, God is the subsisting Perfect, Cause and End of all: Alpha and Omega. God enters the metaphysical order as cause of being as such. Everything that has the slightest participation in being must necessarily depend on Him. Whether it be the substance of things or their activity, everything is suspended from Him. There is nothing new that does not suppose Him; the things of time are possible because they are suspended from eternity; there is no progress possible if He is not. The finite as such from the view-point of being is merest potency: it is not the cause of its being, nor the adequate cause of its activity. Hence the very dynamism which we have seen to be characteristic of the finite supposes God. Its object is the acquisition of God, and it is incapable of the slightest progress if it is not upheld by Him. If progress means anything, it implies acquisition of being, addition to being, and it would be an immediate contradiction to suppose that the slightest addition to being were possible without God, for it would be to suppose that there could be being without a *raison d'être*.

This, it seems to us, points to the fundamental weakness of those systems which deny the subsisting God in favour of a God who lies at the horizon of finite activity, a God who is not, but who is in process of becoming. Without the subsisting God, this very activity and progress is contradictory. This adds a new significance to the distinction which St. Thomas makes between an end as yet to be realised and an end which, already existing, one intends to acquire.¹ He

1.—*Restat igitur inquirendum quomodo Deus sit omnium finis . . . Sic enim est ultimus finis omnium rerum quod tamen est prius omnibus in essendo. Finis autem aliquis invenitur qui, etiam si primatum obtineat in causando secundum quod est in intentione, est tamen in essendo posterius; quod quidem contingit in quolibet fine quem agens sua actione constituit; sicut medicus constituit sanitatem per suam actionem in infirmo, quae tamen est finis ejus. Aliquis autem finis invenitur qui, sicut est praecedens in causando, ita etiam in essendo praecedit; sicut dicitur finis id quod aliquis sua actione vel motu acquirere intendit, ut locum sursum ignis per suum motum, et civitatem rex per pugnam. Deus igitur sic est finis rerum sicut aliquid ab unaquaque re suo modo obtinendum. Deus est simul ultimus rerum finis, et primum agens, ut ostensum est. Finis autem per actionem agentis*

concludes that God is not something as yet to be constituted by the activity of the finite, nor yet that anything can be added to His substantial perfection through the efforts of the creature. Rather, He it is whom creatures desire to obtain, each in its own way. God, therefore, for St. Thomas is not something as yet to be realised, as Fichte and many modern philosophers would hold, but rather the Reality which makes all progress possible. He has no need of the finite, but the finite has every need of Him. If He has given being to the finite it was as a means of giving Himself in that perfection which the creature so much desires. To acquire God to the extent of its powers; to become God-like in the measure possible—such is the deepest law of the finite.

It is God, therefore, that draws all things to Him. Yet, in the creature He has crystallised by the union of matter and form, the natural principle of its activity. Divine wisdom has disposed all things sweetly, so that the finite is not merely led, but, as it were, goes of itself. On its immediate horizon the good rises up with all the attractiveness of perfection. Desire, as it were, epitomises its being, and points beyond the proximate end to the final end of all. Proximate perfections are desired because of an ultimate perfection, and the magnet of the whole universe is God. We may find it difficult to realise this for the lower orders, yet the metaphysics of tendency requires it. In the case of man himself it is not so difficult to see that all his desires are in function of the ideal, and that he is constantly lending an infinite attractiveness to mere finite objects, but it is just as certain that there is something *analogous* in the tendency of all creation towards its God. From the lowest being, where even matter is seen to desire form, up to the highest being that gravitates around the Throne, there is a breath and a motion that

constitutus non potest esse primum agens sed est magis effectus agentis. Non potest igitur Deus sic esse finis rerum quasi aliquid constitutum, sed solum quasi aliquid praeexistens obtinendum . . . Relinquitur igitur quod Deus sit finis rerum, non sicut aliquid constitutum, aut aliquid effectum a rebus, neque ita quod aliquid ei a rebus acquiratur, sed hoc solo modo quia ipse rebus acquiratur.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XVIII.

seems to sweep through all creation, and carries on being in search of its perfection. All creation is an ascent, not merely statically, but dynamically. It is an ascent to God.

Just as statically the different orders of being reflect each other, so dynamically there is a tendency for the lower orders to resemble, so far as that is possible, the higher. For all that, St. Thomas was not misled by the futile idea of an absolute progress. The end towards which things tended was marked for them by their very nature, and for him the most fundamental law of all was for being to remain itself. It would be just as impossible for a being to desire not to be as to desire to be another.

Thus the finite wishes to realise itself, that self which is not yet, but which is embryonically contained in its initial imperfection. It tends to push back the limits that surround it: implicitly it is dynamised by the desire of God. The more imperfect the finite being in question is, the lower its position on the scale of perfection, the greater will its efforts be to remain merely in being, to remain itself despite the internal forces of dissolution and the elusive primal matter, which is never more itself, as we have said, than when not itself. Material beings, spread out in space and time, in constant flux, as it were, are least in possession of themselves. They seem to fall down and disappear in the upward struggle.

Slightly above them life emerges, at first in plant, and then in animal. We are not here occupied with an evolutionary view of things, but are simply taking a cross-section of this ascent of being, sufficient to suggest a progressive ascent and a constant denial of limit as perfection increases. For as being as such is illimited, there is a tendency in the finite as being to deny its limits.

If there is a truth in Hegelian dialectic, then here it is. For what is all creation but an ascent of being from matter struggling on the brink of nothingness up to animal, up to man, up to angel? There is a progressive denial of limit, the negation of a negation, for limit is a negation, though not necessarily in Hegel's sense. The greater cohesion of

certain material bodies, the unification brought about by life, the assimilation proper to living beings, the victory over space and time by motion and elementary memory in the animals—everywhere the denial of limit. And if the scene of this upward ascent is strewn over with the wreckage of individuals, all is not lost to Nature—there is Mind. Epitome of creation, man bears within him a new principle, a new light; he may read creation's meaning and assure for it a final victory.¹

1.—Unumquodque tendit in divinam similitudinem sicut in proprium finem. Illud igitur per quod unumquodque maxime Deo assimilatur est ultimus finis. Deo autem assimilatur maxime creatura intellectualis per hoc quod intellectualis est : hanc enim similitudinem habet prae caeteris creaturis et hoc includit omnes alias.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

CHAPTER II.

MIND AND NATURE.

THROUGHOUT the previous chapter a certain idea delineated itself as the dynamism of lower creation found expression. It is an idea that is as wide as all creation, and is not embarrassed by the different viewpoints from which we may regard the hierarchy of being. It is sure of itself, whether we regard creation in its static hierarchy, or whether we view the ascent of being and the fundamental dynamism that characterises all creation. It is fully expressed by a law that presides over being as such: the law of perfection.

The lower orders of being reflect the higher, the higher contain the lower: the universe entire is a participation in being which is perfection. The imperfect seeks perfection; even matter calls for form; their composite seeks its most perfect operation. The whole seeks God.

(1.) MAN AS MEDIATOR.

Man is mediator in this search for God. The unexhausted tendency of creation he carries on.¹ He is last of the spiritual order and first of material things; he epitomises in himself the lower orders; he is at once the unity of intelligence and matter; though enveloped by sense and things of matter, he is open on the infinite by his intelligence and will; he forms an essential part of the universe,² and is capable of reuniting the scattered rays of being, of beauty, of goodness to give them back that perfection which their many-coloured beauty serves but to dissimulate.

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

2.—Nam homo ordinatur ad perfectionem universi ut essentialis pars ipsius, cum in homini sit aliquid quod non continetur virtute nec in elementis nec in coelestibus corporibus, scilicet anima rationalis.—*De Pot.*, Q. V, art. 10.

If Plato was the first to surmise this fundamental law of perfection, if all his theories are but variants of this fundamental theme,¹ we have seen that his views were vitiated in so far as he had not found an intelligible unity for the movement of the return of things to God. He is not less embarrassed by the soul and body problem: he has failed to find intelligible unity for the mediator of this ascent of being. And if we turn to Plotinus, though one may admire a certain beauty of his spiritualism, where he sees man's whole efforts directed to the conservation of that unity and continuity which on the summit of his being he holds with the intelligible world, yet one is not easily satisfied to accept the mere dead weight of a body external to soul. Coleridge once said that a fundamental truth may lie bedridden for years in the dormitory of the soul. One may well ask if such has not been the fate of the true relation of soul and body. It may sound poetic to speak of body as vesture of the soul, but it lowers singularly the dignity of body.² On the Thomistic system the true intelligible unity is found. There is, as it were, a fusion through and through: he has carried on into man, with certain differences, the matter and form theory which so admirably explained the unity of becoming.

Once St. Thomas had rejected with Aristotle the Platonic idea as separate, his penetration revealed to him the parallelism there must be in his treatment of mind and nature. If the union of matter and form was so necessary to secure the intelligibility of finality and becoming, it was also essential for the intelligible relations of mind and nature and for the carrying on of the progress of things towards perfection.

It is his consciousness of this necessity that explains the parallelism that reveals itself in his treatment both of nature and of man. As there have been different opinions, he says, concerning the union of matter and form in things, so there have been variations of opinion on the question of knowledge.

1.—Cf. E. Faguet, *Pour qu'on lise Platon*, p. 206.

2.—Cf. *De Pot.*, Q. V, art. 10.

Some there were who said that in things all corporeal forms were entirely from within, hidden, as it were, within the bosom of matter, and appearing as the causality of natural agents removed the obstacles that prevented their appearance; others there were for whom such forms were entirely from without, saying that such forms derived from the active intelligence, and, accordingly, the rôle of natural agents was reduced merely to preparing the dispositions of matter for their arrival. Finally, there were those who synthesised and saw that the true view was that such forms were partially from within, in so far as matter contained them potentially, and partially from without, since they were reduced to act under the influence of natural causes. In like manner, he adds, there have been different opinions regarding knowledge. For some, knowledge was entirely from within, contained in the soul and coming to consciousness as the obstacles were removed by discipline and exercise. These obstacles really, according to them, came from the body which served but to plunge the soul into the darkness of the sensible and of matter. Others, he adds, regarded knowledge as entirely from without, resulting, as Avicenna held, from the influx of the active intelligence. Finally, there is what he considers the true view, according to which knowledge is natural to the soul according to its aptitude to acquire it.¹

To appreciate this we need to consider that for man a thing is said to be natural in two ways; on the one hand, from the view-point of the species or nature, on the other, from the individual's view-point. Because everything participates in the species in so far as it has form, and is individual in virtue of its matter, for man his form is the rational soul, the matter his 'informed' body. What is attributable to man according to his rational soul is natural to him from view-point of species; what is natural to the particular constitution of body, that is said to be natural to each individual. In both ways knowledge is natural to man in a

1.—Ia-IIae, Q. LXIII, art. 1. Cf. *Ibid.*, Q. LI, art. 1; Ia., Q. LXXIV, art. 4; *De Verit.*, Q. X, art. 6.

certain inchoate fashion : according to the species, in so far as man is endowed with the faculty of first principles : *intellectus principiorum*. Individually, it is natural according to the particular bodily dispositions of each one.

The parallel continues . . . Just as in the inferior orders the composite is that which is most perfect, notwithstanding the intelligibility of idea and form,¹ so in man the union of soul and body is that wherein man, from view-point of natural perfection, most resembles God.²

But if his treatment reveals this constant parallel it is with an idea. Already we may surmise it. Statically considered, the perfection of any particular being is essentially imperfect as part of the entire universe.³ Just as within any particular species, by the fact that the same perfection is possessed by many, it is not perfectly possessed by any one in particular, so when we view the perfection of finite beings in regard to that of the entire universe, they have a mere partial perfection if they are viewed isolatedly. Accordingly, says St. Thomas, for such a deficiency it was necessary to find a *remedy*, whereby isolated perfection could be seen in the light of the whole.⁴ This remedy, he says, we find in intelligence, in mind. Mind supplies the magic crystal wherein is reflected, so far as that is possible for the finite, the perfection of the whole universe, and wherein the interpenetration of being and perfection takes place.

1.—Ia., Q. III, art. 7, ad 2 ; Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. III, art. 5, c. and ad 1 ; C.G., lib. III, cap. XX.

2.—*De Pot.*, Q. V, art. 10, ad 5.

3.—Sciendum igitur, quod res aliqua invenitur perfecta dupliciter. Uno modo secundum perfectionem sui esse, quod ei competit secundum propriam speciem. Sed quia esse specificum unius rei est distinctum ab esse specifico alterius rei, ideo in qualibet re creata hujusmodi perfectioni habitae in unaquaque re, tantum deest de perfectione simpliciter, quantum perfectius in aliis speciebus invenitur ; ut cujuslibet perfectio in se considerata sit imperfecta, veluti pars totius perfectionis universi, quae consurgit ex singularum rerum perfectionibus, invicem congregatis.—*De Verit.*, Q. II, art. 2.

4.—Unde ut huic imperfectioni aliquod remedium esset, invenitur alius modus perfectionis in rebus creatis, secundum quod perfectio quae est propria unius rei, in altera re invenitur ; et haec est perfectio rei cognoscentis in quantum esse cognoscens ; quia secundum hoc a cognoscente aliquod cognoscitur quod ipsum cognitum aliquo modo est apud cognoscentem ; et ideo in III De Anima (com. 15 et 17) dicitur animam esse quodammodo omnia, quia nata est omnia cognoscere. Et secundum hunc modum possibile est ut in una re totius universi perfectio existat.—*De Verit.*, loc. cit.

In the mirror of the human mind the metaphysical perfection of sensible creation is reflected actively ; it concentrates within itself the scattered perfections of finite creatures. Such is intelligence as "remedy" for the universe's imperfection in the static hierarchy of things.

Dynamically, its rôle is even more marked. We begin to see the converging destinies of nature and mind : we realise how well, as Wordsworth put it, the two are fitted. For as finality is a necessity of being as such its highest manifestation, perhaps, is that of the relation of mind to nature.

Nature is ever an ascent to God : its tendency to Him as first-desired of all is inexhausted by its partial and proximate realisations. It comes to consciousness in the mind of man, who expresses for it its meaning and imparts to it a perfection that of itself it could not attain. The material world must fall down defeated in its upward struggle if man is not there to lift up its voice and express its inert praise. If nature is intelligible, containing within it idea and form, man is at least the proximate end towards which it tends ; he is the proper mediator between it and God. While he is an epitome of all creation, on the summits of his being his horizon is illimited.

This it is that renders possible the return of being to God, and permits the reduction of all creation to its Desired. The lower orders, left to themselves, exhaust their efforts in particular ends ; they participate in the divine goodness only by being, in the case of inanimate creation, or in life and knowledge of the particular, as with the plant and animal. Rational nature, however, is not thus limited to the particular passing fact. Knowledge is not the mere stamping of something external on a purely passive mind ; in no intelligible sense is knowledge a mere copy of reality. Mind's privilege it is to grasp the intelligibility of things ; it welcomes from its side the convergence of nature ; it finds an outlet for its own desire and carries on creation in its movement towards God. For this reason St. Thomas recognised that the human mind had a certain immediate

relation to the Deity as contrasted with the lower orders.¹ Corporeal substance, he says, cannot be "reduced" immediately to God;² the potential intelligibility it possess calls for mind; as such it is incapable of expressing the finality of its being, the praise of God; it is unintelligible without the presence of mind. It is the rôle of man in creation to close, as it were, the cycle of things: to reduce the lower orders to God. In a word, man is nature's pontiff.

We need to look more closely at this point of contact between nature and mind to realise with precision in what sense the human mind is the divinely appointed "remedy" for nature's imperfection.

If man's mind contains within itself the perfection of lower orders it is essentially by way of knowledge.³ To explain this process of "intussuception" St. Thomas rejects immediately the old Greek adage that "like knows like" in so far as it would require the presence of material elements in the soul, and with it all materialistic explanations of knowledge. He points to the true law of knowledge, that it is a function of immateriality. As immateriality increases, the power of knowledge is augmented. He also indicates in what direction lies progress for creation: it is when sensible being is raised to the life of the subject in knowledge that it is on the way to its highest perfection. Perfection is a progress towards unity.⁴ As in the lower orders the appearance of life marks a greater unification and concentration, so with knowledge a higher unity is possible for things: in mind things find their perfection and their true meaning. Knowledge, therefore, is not the merest passive reception of things. Rather, it is the uplifting of material things to a participation in a higher

1.—*Natura autem rationalis, in quantum cognoscit universalem boni et entis rationem, habet immediatum ordinem ad universale essendi principium.*—IIa-IIae., Q. II, art. 3.

2.—*Non igitur possibile est quod immediate sub Deo collocatur corporalis substantia.*—*De Spirit. Creaturis*, Q. I, art. 5.

3.—*De Verit.*, Q. II, art. 2.

4.—*Hoc enim rerum ordo habet, quod quanto aliquid est superius, tanto habet virtutem magis unitam et ad plura se extendentem.*—Ia., Q. LVII, art. 2,

form of life. It is, to employ the just expression of Aquinas, the rendering *actually* intelligible a universe which, of itself, is merely potentially intelligible.¹

It has been said, however, that when St. Thomas envisages the necessity of intelligence in the universe, it is rather angelic intelligence that he has in view, not the human mind: a chapter on mind and nature is really lacking, we are told, in St. Thomas.²

From what has preceded one may judge of the inadequacy of such a view, if it is intended to express the whole thought of Aquinas on the matter. Such a lack would be rather surprising, in so far as it would imply that St. Thomas had never adverted to the sublime rôle of philosophy in the universe, and had not noticed that the philosopher unites himself to God, the conscious Source of order, by concurring with the order of the universe. When St. Thomas speaks of the rôle of intelligence, if he does not positively mention man, which is not true in all instances, as we have seen, neither does he exclude the human mind, which also participates in intelligence. Moreover, has he not said that the human soul renders actually intelligible what is merely potentially so in sensible creation: what could nature mean to angelic intelligence which receives its ideas from God?

True, he does not frequently expose his views directly on the question. Yet we believe the very essentials may be found in the opening articles of the *De Veritate*. There the rôle of philosophy is clearly indicated and the metaphysical relations of mind and nature summarily outlined. To find throughout his works the few elements necessary to complete these articles has not been so difficult.

When he speaks of the necessity of intelligence he is laying down general principles that are applicable, not only to angelic, but human intelligence, as intelligence. When he claims intelligence as a necessity for the return of being to

1.—Res enim materiales, ut Commentator dicit, non sunt intelligibiles nisi quia nos facimus eas intelligibiles, sunt enim intelligibiles in potentia tantum; sed actu intelligibiles efficiuntur per lumen intellectus agentis, sicut et colores actu visibiles per lumen solis.—*De Verit.*, Q. II, art. 2.

2.—J. Rimaud, *Thomisme et méthode*, Paris, 1925, p. 238

God and for the perfection of the universe, there is no reason why his reasoning may not apply to the human mind. In many instances, contrary to the assertion of R. P. Rimaud, he directly envisages the human mind, as when, for instance, he makes the general remark that corporeal things are ordered to intelligent nature as to their end.¹ Further, the general principle of St. Thomas, which we shall have to examine more in detail later, that in the hierarchy of things the perfection of being depends, not only on what being can acquire of itself, but that which it can receive from communication with the higher orders, may also be applied to the relations of nature and the human mind.

The progress from nature to mind is for sensible creation advance towards perfection. So little is it a falsification of an nature that it is rather the perfection of nature. Its deepest tendency, which is that towards God, is being realised. It finds in mind the truth of its very being. For that reason St. Thomas could not have chosen a better word than "remedy" to express the rôle of mind in its relation to nature. What Michael Angelo wrote of beauty may well be applied to the being of nature as it advances upwards into the human mind; for it

. . . grows in radiance as it soars on high
Through mortal eyes into the soul above :
'Tis there transfigured,—for the soul confers
On what she holds, her own divinity.

(2.) MIND IS THE TRUTH OF NATURE.

The better to express this ineffable union of nature with mind, more intimate, said St. Thomas, than that of matter and form, we may regard the first moment of their meeting as a sympathetic configuration of mind to reality, where mind becomes, so far as that is possible, reality itself, to express it then in the idea or concept. It is such an intimate

1.—We have but to regard the context to realise this, for immediately previously he says : *Nec debet haec ratio frivola reputare quod Deus aliquid faciat in natura ad hoc quod se mentibus humanis manifestat cum supra ostensum sit quod omnes creaturae corporales ad naturam intellectualem ordinentur quodammodo.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. XCIX.

embrace of matter and spirit that St. Thomas sees in the act of knowledge. If it is possible, it is because reality and mind are not *radically* opposed.

The central tenet of modern idealistic philosophy is a similar one. "If nature be a living force," wrote F. Schlegel,—“if the life which reigns within it be, in a certain though remote degree akin to the life of man and the human soul—then is a knowledge of reality easily conceivable . . . But if nature be a stony mass, as many seem to suppose, then would it be wholly inconceivable how this foreign mass of petrification could penetrate into the inmost Ego, then at least there would be good grounds for the idealistic doubt whether ultimately this external world would be anything but a mere phantom,—having no existence save in our own thoughts—the outward reflection of ourselves, the pure creation of our own Me.”¹

The “idealistic doubt” has in reality become a principle. The “disquieting thought” of the “utter deadness and soullessness of the vast world of things around us”² has been replaced by the thought of a “nature which was not an outcast and dead but spiritual and alive”.³ We need but recall the names of Schelling, Goethe, Emerson, Carlyle, and, in a sense, Wordsworth, to realise the vogue of such a conception of nature.

In technical philosophy there has been a progress from the “esse est percipi” of Berkeley, and an attempt at a justification of idealism more intrinsic to man and nature than was possible for a Christian thinker such as Berkeley was. A. E. Taylor, while admitting that “esse est percipi” is not the whole truth, grants with Bradley the principle that “presence in any experience is ‘the meaning of existence’ is so self-evident as not to be disputed”.⁴ Indeed, the progress of thought from Berkeley might be a rather natural

1.—*Philosophy of Life*, Eng. trans. (Bohn), p. 76.

2.—A. E. Taylor, *Mind and Nature*.—*International Journal of Ethics*, Oct. (1902), pp. 55 sqq.

3.—B. Bosanquet, *Dark Ages and the Renaissance*.—*International Journal of Ethics*, Jan. (1902), pp. 196 sqq.

4.—*Loc. cit.*

one, particularly if all immediate contact with reality is denied to human knowledge. Kant, in his refutation of Berkeley, merely stayed the course of events for a moment.

Kant had accepted with apparently no hesitation the position that sensations as sensations form the only starting point. He *assumed* that they were given primarily as sensations, and that their objective character was a matter for subsequent justification.¹ He had implicitly accepted the principle of modern philosophy since Descartes and Locke : mind has no other object except its own ideas. But it is here precisely the question of realism or idealism should have begun. Kant does not seem to have realised it, and the denial of the thing in itself which symbolised the representationalism that Kant had inherited, opened the way towards placing idealism on a firmer basis than ever.

We have already marked Fichte's objection to the thing in itself, as well as to the possibility of reality that would be outside of thought. In him we have a sincere effort to see in the possibility of being a possibility for thought. Since for him, as Auguste Valensin has shown, thought is by definition the only being that can say what it is, or attribute being to anything or affirm existence, it follows that nothing could exist except on the condition of its being affirmed or posited. Hence, for a determinate thought nothing is, except it is posited or affirmed. But because no thought could affirm a thing that would not be, by that very fact, the object of its knowledge and object within thought, it follows that the "unknowable" is synonymous with the absolutely impossible, and the expression "beyond thought" is equivalent to "beyond being".²

Objectivity, accordingly, receives a new meaning in idealism. It can no longer mean something beyond mind or thought. Rather, it is opposed to that which in particular minds is pure representation : it is the basis and foundation for the accord of minds.

1.—Cf. J. M. O'Sullivan, *Old Criticism and New Pragmatism*, Dublin, 1909, pp. 298 sqq.

2.—*Op. cit.*, leçon V, p. 79.

Accordingly, the root of idealistic difficulties is just this conception of something entirely extrinsic to thought. For the idealist such necessarily is the case of matter. Matter for him is what is essentially opposed to thought. It is the foundation, as we have recognised, of multiplicity, whereas that alone is intelligible which is one. It is opposed to the intelligible, for it is of the sensible order. But that alone can exist or claim to be, which is intelligible and a possible object for thought. Hence, matter cannot exist in itself, but must derive in some way from mind. Mind alone unifies things. Deny matter and nature becomes the unfolding of a thought. In a word, mind becomes the truth of nature.

It will be abundantly clear from our previous chapter that the movement of our thought, inspired by that of St. Thomas, results in a similar conclusion. For St. Thomas also, though in a different sense, mind is the truth of nature.

We have seen with what care he has handled the theory of matter and form. For him also, multiplicity derives, at least within the species, from matter. In a sense matter is that which is opposed to intelligibility, and one of the delicate points of his theory of knowledge is the problem of the immediate intellectual knowledge of the individual. He even remarks that it is not particularity or individuality as such which is opposed to knowledge, but materiality.¹ Moreover, he has not neglected to find a unity for multiplicity, and thereby shown that within being absolute disorder and unintelligibility are impossible. Being as such is that which is entirely luminous and identical with itself, and all things are but a participation in being. Just as outside of being nothing is possible, so within being everything is related to thought. There is for St. Thomas no such thing as an unknowable reality. A matter that would be out of relation to *all* thought would be impossible. So far St. Thomas and the idealist go hand in hand.

But it is here that the parting of the way comes, for while idealism seeks the unifying principle in thought itself, not

1.—Singularē non repugnat intelligi, in quantum singulare, sed in quantum est materiale.—Ia., Q. LXXXVI, art. 1, ad 3.

clearly distinguishing human and divine thought, St. Thomas denies that this is either possible or necessary.

He seeks the unifying principle at once in the union of matter with idea, and in the necessary relation of the composite as term of the creative act, to the divine Being.¹ He saves the objectivity and irreducibility of matter to mind, but does not hypostasise a matter as some "noumenon" or unknowable reality out of all relation to thought. "Form" has of itself sufficient resemblance to mind to communicate intelligibility and unity, and, as co-principle of matter, it forms the composite, which is the term of the creative act.

We have seen how the saint carried out this idea, for the sensible is intelligible only potentially: *nihil est eorum quae sunt ante intelligere*.² Accordingly, it is in the knowing subject that nature finds its integration, its actual intelligibility, and as it finds itself present to the knowing subject, nature participates in the subject's nature. In the judgement, mind renders actual that intelligibility already contained in nature. By affirmation it detaches its object and poses it, as it were, as it finds it, *in se*, and not merely in itself, in its own thought. So doing, the subject affirms experience as intelligible, as reducible to a thought-formula. It affirms likewise an affinity between itself and reality. The view of idealism that reality is not something entirely and radically heterogenous to thought is legitimate. To deny it would be tantamount to accepting an equivocation in being.

On the other hand, to avoid equivocation it is not necessary to fall back on the identity of the idealist. The external world is not got rid of by being mentalised. Its outstanding characters remain. If the predicate, mental, is to have any meaning, it is in contradistinction to non-mental. For that it is not necessary either to see in the non-mental something

1.—*Materia prima habet esse substantiale per formam; et ideo oportuit quod crearetur sub aliqua forma, alioquin non esset in actu.*—Ia., Q. LXXXIV, art. 3, ad 2. Idea (divina) proprie non respondet materiae tantum, nec formae tantum, sed composito toti respondet una idea quae est factiva totius et quantum ad formam et quantum ad materiam.—*De Verit.*, Q. III, art. 5, and ad 2. Cf. Ia., Q. XLIV, art. 4, ad 4; *De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 16, ad 1.

2.—*Metaph.*, lib. I, lect. 1,

radically and entirely out of all relation to mind. What is needed is the concept of analogy. The fusion or identification in an univocal concept of mind and matter, any more than the exaggerated dualism of "equivocation," is not satisfying.

There are, so it seems to us, two moments in an adequate theory of knowledge. It is not our purpose to exhaust them here. A first moment would be given by an examination of that objectivity which is given in conscious life; it would dispute the postulate of modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant: we could not grant Kant his starting-point. The other arises, necessarily, if we undertake to answer all possible questions that arise, and a theory of knowledge does seem to take on itself, starting from that methodic doubt which Aristotle recognised as the starting point of philosophic inquiry, to give mind that security it seeks in fighting doubt. It would consist in transcending the subject-object relation which is characteristic of knowledge at the human level. And this would be to raise the fundamental question of the analogy of being, which is only adequately founded when we have discovered the unity of being in God. The problem of knowledge, we should say, arises in Epistemology; but its final and adequate solution is in Metaphysics.

The problem of mind and nature thus leads us back to the analogy of being, and because God in the final source of analogy, it leads ultimately to Him. *All* finality must be considered in terms of being. The relation of nature and mind is but a particular case, no doubt the most important one, of a teleological relation that is entirely necessary, and for its adequate solution it also must be attached to the Real-Ideal.

Because intelligence and reality are both being, and as being analogically one, and because being that is entirely being is likewise intelligence, it is clear that mind and nature are related essentially one to the other. The real, in so far as it participates in being, is necessarily related to intelligence: hence intelligible. Intelligence itself, no matter what its position in the hierarchy of perfection be, is likewise

intelligence with its adequate object, being.¹ We cannot, therefore, continue to regard nature and mind as complete strangers. Nature is not something completed, where knowledge is concerned, existing on its own account, completely out of relation to mind. Both are metaphysically complementary; it is in mind that nature finds its proper integration.

Reality is, as it were, but a passive reflection of God. Mind is an active one, and it is by means of the active that the passive reflection will be made to reveal fully its divine origin and intelligibility. The world is saturated with idea, with spirit, with law: it is idea crystallised, thought materialised, law realised. Mind reflects back this inherent intelligibility of things. It answers to the very dynamism of reality; it is the term of the evolution of things. A pure determinable could not exist: the absolutely indeterminate is impossible. Matter, that is *materia prima*, is as such purely indeterminate, the merest limit and negation, but the moment it has idea, towards which it tends, in so far as that is possible, it has the germ of activity, and prophetically the guarantee of its intelligibility. All nature is, as it were, in movement, it tends, and mind is the term of its tendency.²

It is for the human mind to elevate and express this inherent tendency of all creation, which on last analysis is towards God Himself.³

Just as we cannot erect an absolute opposition between nature and the human mind, so we cannot regard the subject-object relation as a necessity of knowledge as such. It was just the error of Fichte to have done so. For him knowledge,

1.—Est enim proprium objectum intellectus ens intelligibile, quod quidem comprehendit omnes differentias et species entis possibilis . . . quidquid enim esse potest intelligi potest.—C.G., lib. II, cap. XCVIII.

2.—Complementum autem cujuslibet motus est in suo termino. Motus autem cognitivae virtutis terminatur ad animam.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 2. Cf. the suggestive remarks of R. P. Sertillanges in his *S. Thomas d'Aquin* (1925), vol. II, p. 30-35; also his article, *L'être et la connaissance*—*Mélanges thomistes*, Kain (Belgique), p. 174-197.

3.—Constet . . . finem ultimum universi Deum esse quem sola intellectualis natura consequitur in seipso, eum scilicet cognoscendo et amando.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV. Sola igitur intellectualis natura est propter se quaesita in universo, alia autem propter ipsam.—C.G., lib. III, cap. CXII.

which was just the consciousness of self, was not possible unless the Ego posited the object which was a necessary moment in its process of returning back on itself, to seize itself in knowledge: "sich sein bewusst sein." St. Thomas has explicitly refuted such a supposition in different parts of his writings. "It has been said," he remarks, "that every knower in full consciousness of his essence returns to himself fully, as it were." "In reality," he replies, "this is a mere metaphor to express the fact that such a knower is in immediate possession of itself as knower.¹ Because God, by His complete subsistence, is in perfect possession of Himself, He is also present to Himself by knowledge."²

For St. Thomas there was no necessity on the part of God to posit the object that He might know Himself: He was already completely present to Himself. In particular, the placing of finite beings outside Him by creative act was a free act. Yet, creation as a participation in being, as an imitation *ad extra* of God, is essentially intelligible.³ That, precisely, was ever the metaphysical view-point of St. Thomas.

If we may find certain apparent hesitations about his views on chance, that is, from a metaphysical view-point, we cannot expect him always to speak as a metaphysician seeing the many interests that were present to his mind. He was

1.—Locutio haec qua dicitur, quod sciens se, ad essentiam suam redit, est locutio metaphorica; non enim in intelligendo est motus, ut probatur in VII Physic (com. 20); unde nec, proprie loquendo, est ibi recessus aut reditus. . . . Sed tamen sciendum, quod reditio ad essentiam suam in lib. de Causis nihil aliud dicitur nisi subsistentia rei in seipsa.—*De Verit.*, Q. II, art. 2, ad 2.

2.—Redire ad essentiam suam nihil aliud est quam rem subsistere in seipsa. . . . Virtutes igitur cognoscitivae, quae non sunt subsistentes, sed actus aliquorum organorum, non cognoscunt seipsas, sicut patet in singulis sensibus. Sed virtutes cognoscitivae per se subsistentes cognoscunt seipsas. Et propter hoc dicitur, quod sciens essentiam suam, redit ad essentiam suam. Per se autem subsistere maxime convenit Deo. Unde secundum hunc modum loquendi ipse est maxime rediens ad essentiam suam, cognoscens seipsum.—*Ia.*, Q. XIV, art. 2, ad 1.

3.—Sapientiam dicitur mobilis esse similitudinarie; secundum quod suam similitudinem diffundit usque ad ultima rerum; nihil enim esse potest quod non procedat a divina sapientia per quamdam imitationem.—*Ia.*, Q. IX, art. 1, ad 2. Sicut Deus est unus, ita et unum produxit: non solum quia unumquodque in se est unum, sed etiam quod omnia quodammodo sunt unum perfectum, quae quidem unitas diversitatem partium requirit.—*De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 16, ad 1.

not always necessarily speaking from an exclusively metaphysical view-point: the polemics of his day forbade it. Yet the metaphysic of being and knowledge is always implicitly present to his mind. When he has advanced to the metaphysical principles that govern a particular exposition he frequently returns again to exclude what, apparently, he has excluded already in a less intransigent manner.¹

He never ceases to indicate that both the theory of chance and the view of a necessary emanation are precisely a denial of idea.² It is necessary, he says, to admit ideas; by ideas are understood the forms of things that exist independently of things. Such a form may have a two-fold purpose; it may serve as the exemplar of the thing of which it is the form, or it may be the principle of knowledge according to the dictum: *formae cognoscibilium dicuntur esse in cognoscente*. Here we are moving towards what must be the ultimate metaphysical meaning behind the formula: Mind is the truth of nature. God is not merely efficient and final cause of all, but the Exemplar of all created being. Nature is properly speaking the divine art, that is the thought of God objectified, and if the current formula has it that art imitates nature, we may reverse it and see in it a deep meaning. For nature imitates art: it is the divine art. But, also, nature is in a certain far-off sense, all proportion being observed, human art. A far-off imitation of the divine, it is at every moment an imitation of the human mind.

St. Thomas is careful to remark the essential difference that separates the divine from human art. It is a difference that has a fundamental philosophical significance. Human

1.—Per hoc autem excluditur antiquorum naturalium error qui ponebant, omnia fieri ex necessitate materiae, causam finalem a rebus penitus subtrahentes.—C.G., lib. III, cap. II.

2.—Illi qui ponebant omnia accidere casu non poterant ideam ponere.—*De Verit.*, Q. III, art. 1. Necesse est ponere in mente divina ideas. *Idea* enim graece, latine *forma* dicitur. Unde per ideas intelliguntur formae aliquarum rerum praeter ipsas res existentes. Forma autem alicujus rei praeter ipsam existens ad duo esse potest; vel ut sit exemplar ejus cujus dicitur forma; vel ut sit principium cognitionis secundum ipsius quod formae cognoscibilium dicuntur esse in cognoscente.—Ia., Q. XV, art. 1.

art presupposes a given matter : the divine is productive of the whole. The exemplar ideas of God, he says, are productive not only of the form but of the matter, and thus have reference to the individual in its very individuality.¹ The material individual which is opaque for the human mind, where an immediate intellectual intuition is concerned, is completely intelligible in regard to God. The divine essence, considered as intelligence, is the idea of things. Mind is the truth of nature. But, he continues, since created things do not perfectly imitate the divine essence, the divine essence is not accepted by divine intelligence as the idea of things, except in relation to the things to be produced. That is the final precision from God's view-point, that the formula "Mind is the truth of nature" requires.

From the human point of view it is clear that as the richness of mind increases the truth of nature may be said to progress, for nature imitates art and participates in the progress of mind. The concept of nature, said Emerson, implied progress. We have but to view the different literatures to see at once the contribution of mind as well as the influence of nature. The mythology of Greece is characteristically different from that of northern Europe. In effect, it is in virtue of that fundamental finality of nature and mind that literature is not the merest apocalypse of imagining, and that human language may express the highest thoughts. As the human mind progresses it is coming nearer to the exemplar of which nature is but a copy.

Thus it is that nature, imitation of the divine art, becomes an imitation of the human. Its growth in divine similitude may increase as the human mind advances in the perfection of knowledge. Everywhere, and at all times, nature is struggling into consciousness, and as minds rise up above the common lot of men, nature participates in some new vision. For art, as Oscar Wilde wrote, is mind expressing itself under the condition of matter ; and nature is matter struggling into mind.

1.—*Quodlibet* VIII, Q. I, art. 2.

(3.) THE LAW OF EXPRESSION.

We have seen in what sense mind may be said to be the truth of nature. Mind reveals the universal, the necessary and essential characters of reality, and sees in them the reflections of the divine Exemplar. Nature at the sense-level is not the common heritage of men, except in so far as it contains potentially the intelligible. Mind integrates nature : it reveals in act nature's truth and beauty and goodness. We found it necessary to transcend finite mind in search of the full metaphysical meaning of the idealistic formula, and now from another view-point we are about to realise the same truth. The human mind is but a moment, as it were, in the progress of being. Like nature itself, the finite mind is naturally turned beyond itself : God is the End of all.

Were we to seek a modern formula for the metaphysical theory of that finality which vivifies, as it were, all being, we may well find it in the law of expression. The law of finality is really a law of self-expression. Within being, being is either perfect, an end unto itself, its full expression of itself to itself, or it is imperfect, tending necessarily to express itself in the highest perfection it can attain. Creation is pervaded through and through by this desire of expression.

If the human mind expresses nature it also depends on nature for the stimulus, for that excitant that sends it back wonderingly on itself, as it experiences the intimate law of its being, its tendency to realise itself, to express itself. It discovers in the dynamism of lower beings the law that governs all creation. It is awakened to seek the law of its own being by its contact with nature. Is self-realisation, self-expression the law of its being also? And in what sense?

The human mind speaks creation to God, and God to creation. It has but to reflect on itself to realise the participated perfection which it possesses. St. Thomas spoke of a certain immediate knowledge which the soul possessed

of itself by reflection on its own act. In this intimacy of the soul to itself there is meeting place for both idealist and realist. The idealist may see that he is not one essentially with the Absolute. Whether in contemplation of itself in the act of thought, or in immediate presence to the real, the human mind realises that it is not completely in act, that it is not fully expressed to itself, but that a necessary contingency is at the root of this need for self-expression. Whether in life or in knowledge man is only too conscious of the fleeting and successive character of his expressions :

And thou my perfect work, thou'rt of to-day ;
To-morrow a poor and alien thing will be.

Because it is not being as such, or perfect act, the human mind realises its position in the hierarchy of things as mediator between matter and God. It is not the end towards which all creation tends. It is neither the final end of the lower orders, nor to itself its own end. It carries on the urge of all finite being, and seeks to express itself. Everywhere around it, and within itself, it recognises within the limited traces of an illimited aspiration ; relative non-being is for it redolent of being as such.

The gradual ascent of being seemed, as it were, to pass from ruin to ruin, where the lower was subordinated to the higher, and where the lion lived at the lamb's expense. Death itself seemed to bear within it the hope of life. Only by death to itself, in a sense, could the lower participate in the higher perfection which, through its sacrifice, what St. Thomas called the "*intentio naturae*" was realised. It is the fate of merely subordinate perfection to contribute to the grandeur of the whole. And if man is not subordinate in this sense, and if for a moment his mind may stabilise the tendency of all inferior creation, yet he must also recognise in his impulse towards perfection his own subordinate character where the final end of all is concerned.

If nature is integrated by mind, yet it was creation that first awoke mind to its own grandeur, and to an aspiration that went beyond nature itself. Its dependency on reality is only too clear. If it has expressed creation the first call

was from without. True, the idea as such was not in nature : it was born of the commerce of nature and mind. There was at once the impulse of nature and mind's reaction. If nature finds its highest expression, mind has also found an expression, a new realisation of its potentialities. Such is the finality of nature and mind that nature ministers to the life of spirit and helps the human soul to express itself. Matter was not for St. Thomas the merest inert obstacle. Nature, dependent as it is for actual intelligibility on the presence of mind, may vaunt its importance as a necessary moment in the life of the human spirit. The soul has not come "trailing clouds of glory," if that implies Platonic reminiscence. St. Thomas is frank. The body is naturally united to the soul. Apart, the soul may by its very spirituality afford a certain vague intuition of being. It is united to body that it may realise itself. So it is through sense and imagination the human mind is first attained. In its highest ascent, somewhat like the kite which an invisible thread binds to earth, it bears traces of its union with the body. Its highest expression will have to clothe itself in the flesh-garment of imagination if it is to appear among men : the image is seen to be the sacrament of idea.

We do not thereby assert the intrinsic dependence of idea on the image, nor make of it a mere refinement of it ; we wish to mark its necessity for human intelligence in the initial moments of its potentiality. It is but natural to remark the influence of sensibility on the functioning of such an intelligence. On last analysis, it brings us back to the fundamental finality of mind and nature. It is characteristic of man that truth requires a formula and that expression is an exigency of his spiritual life, which, because of its finitude and potentiality, is ever seeking its perfection.¹ Schiller's statement,

Dein Wissen theilest du mit vorgezogenen Geistern ;
Die Kunst, o Mensch, hast du allein

1.—Verbum Dei repræsentatur aliquo modo per verbum nostri intellectus quod nihil aliud est quam quaedam acceptio actualis nostræ notitiæ: cum enim id quod scimus, actu considerando concepimus, hoc verbum nostri intellectus est, et hoc est quod verbo exteriori significamus. Sed quia non

is true in so far as it places *within* man the artistic process. It adumbrates the fundamental law whereby for man the abstract tends to assume a concrete form, as well as his dependency in this life on material things for the origins of his knowledge.¹

Here, again, the finality of nature and mind pursues its purpose. Mind goes to nature for the vesture which its thought requires. It finds there successful, if not perfectly adequate, means of expression. When Schiller spoke of art as man's exclusive heritage he seemed to forget that nature was also an objective process of art. Nature does not fully express the divine Mind. It presents the divine Artist with a limited medium. Yet the intelligibility of the divine idea shines through, and human art and expression is but a far-off imitation of the divine process. Human thought must feel the inadequacy of the image as well as of outer expression. Dante well complained of the unresponding matter.

That as oftimes but ill accords the form
To the design of art, through sluggishness
Of unreplying matter.

There is necessarily something asymptotic about human expression; yet it brings abstractions successfully down to earth.

Like nature, therefore, body has a necessary value as organ of man's spiritual life. In Thomism there is no place for a Manichean contempt of matter, nor for Plotinian shame of body. The body is daughter of God and spouse of spirit. It has its rôle in human progress. Perfection is not merely a victory over body: it is a development of self.

But this development of self, what does it imply? If we see in human life an expression of self, it is necessary to view this expression in a synthetic way. It is just the

totum id quod habitu scimus, actu mente concepimus, sed de uno intelligibili movemur ad aliud; id est quod in nobis non est unum solum verbum mentale: sed multa, quorum nullum adaequat scientiam nostram. Sed Deus quidquid scit, actu intelligit; et ideo in mente ejus non succedit verbum verbo.—Quodlibet. IV, art. 6. Cf. Ia., Q. XXVII, art. 1; De Pot., Q. VIII, art. 1.

1.—Modus cognitionis sequitur modum naturae rei cognoscentis; anima nostra quamdiu in hac vita vivimus, habet esse in materia corporali: unde naturaliter non cognoscit aliquid, nisi quae habet formam in materia vel quae per hujusmodi cognosci possunt.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 11.

anomaly of human expression that it is not something of itself immediately unified. Expression by knowledge, for instance, may not go hand in hand with all-round development of character. It is only too clear that the confidence displayed in science to give a full human development has disappeared. There is a moral, as well as an intellectual, expression.

Fichte had said that it was the essence of the Ego to "pose" the object in order to realise itself. For St. Thomas the object is given, and for him it is the object that awakens the human mind to the consciousness of its own dynamism. Whatever may prove to be the ultimate object of this dynamism which appears in human expression, for St. Thomas the immediate object of mind is being in the unity of its transcendental properties. Being is the adequate object of the human mind; truth and goodness and beauty are but aspects of being. If we consider them apart it is the better to know being. Because of their very dispersion in the world of matter, the way of truth and goodness and beauty is not unique. Only too frequently does man realise the divisions and antinomies of his being. Soul and body, speculation and action, science and mysticism are eloquent oppositions. They emphasise what a complex affair human expression may be. Sensibility tends to draw mind down to its own level; will may be impatient of the universal good it seeks; intellect may be lethargic where it is question of all being and truth.

Yet, metaphysics points out that ultimately there must be a possible unification. In the unity of the transcendentals it marks the harmony of truth and goodness and beauty. By making being thus the adequate object of mind it already marks a certain synthesis for human expression, but at the same time it points beyond this abstract unity.

PART. III.

MIND AND GOD.

*Soli Deo beatitudo perfecta est
naturalis; quia idem est ei esse et
beatum esse. Cujuslibet autem creaturae
esse beatum non est naturale, sed
ultimus finis.*

Summa Theologica, Ia., Q. LXII, art. 4.

CHAPTER I.

MIND AND GOD.

IF there is an impulse and effort towards perfection throughout all creation, it is but natural to expect that the human mind, so necessary to nature from this point of view, will participate in the universal law of things. It must find itself impelled by that upward onward motion that seems to sweep through all things and elevate them beyond themselves to greater things. But this urge and impulse towards perfection is not, on last analysis, an aimless striving: it points inevitably to God.

It is advisable to give a particular emphasis to this important point of the metaphysical doctrine of St. Thomas. There are difficulties ahead that are insurmountable, if it is not borne in mind that here we have to do with a theory in metaphysics, and which are rendered less embarrassing, once we consistently remain on the metaphysical plane. This is of so great importance in our eyes that we should have no hesitation in saying that, unless the metaphysical synthesis of Aquinas is grasped in its broad outline, it is futile to think of understanding his treatment of the desire of God as it manifests itself in the human mind. Indeed, for lack of insight into metaphysical preoccupations of the Saint we can conceive the most grotesque doctrines being attributed to him.

If the history of thought, particularly since the sixteenth century, is strewn over with interpretations which are both numerous and conflicting, of the Saint's teaching on this particular question, it is because it has been separated from the wider metaphysical synthesis of which it forms part. So viewed, the problem was cut adrift from its true context; it became an isolated question; and not infrequently did it dwindle down to a mere question in psychology

No one who has read the Saint's treatment can fail to have been impressed by the serenity of his outlook. Surprise is, perhaps, the first emotion that one feels. As he examines beatitude, so desired by man, and relentlessly excludes all finite objects, as incapable of fully satisfying a nature endowed with such faculties as those of intellect and will, or as he traces the ascent of knowledge from crag to crag to where the vast horizons of infinity stretch out before his gaze, we hear him murmur gently: *etiam adhuc*; and as the question rises up before his mind as some arresting spirit, darest thou in desire go further and lift the Isis-veil itself, we seem to hear the rhythm of that dynamic tendency that is at the heart of all finite being begin to formulate: *etiam adhuc* . . . It is just the unformulated reply that has terrified lesser minds, forgetful that long before, down in the very valleys, where animate and inanimate work out their humbler destinies, the desire of God was present.

Every being, no matter what is its position in the hierarchy of perfection, desires God more than itself, desires Him as the First-Desired of all. Many who will easily grant that God, as first efficient cause, enters more intimately into the action of all finite being than any finite cause, are uneasy, so it seems, if they are asked to admit the same truth for God as final cause of all. But there is no escape. One is just as necessary as the other. For as the end, the final end, perfectly corresponds with the first principle of all, it is impossible that, knowing the principle whence all things have come, we should ignore the end towards which all things tend.

God, as first cause, is necessarily final end. The influence of the final cause is that of attraction and of desire aroused. Just as the secondary agent can act only in virtue of the power it derives from the first cause, so the proximate end is desired in virtue of the final end. Just as God, because He is ultimate cause of being, acts in every action of the finite, so as final end He is sought in every action. It is only because He is that any progress is possible, and every progress tends towards Him.

And that, says St. Thomas, is to seek God implicitly.¹ Even when we are not confident that we have fully grasped what such a tendency to God implies, it is something that imposes itself from the metaphysical view-point. Do we really comprehend the manner of God's cooperation with the creature, that we so confidently affirm when it is question of efficiency?

As regards finality, it is at least clear that we must not conceive that God descends, as it were, into the sphere of the relative to become the direct object sought after by man's natural activity. In this sense we may admit the affirmation of P. Gardeil when he says that God is never the direct object of the finite's natural tendency as such, since this tendency expresses itself in the natural activity of the finite.²

God, St. Thomas would have said, had he thought it necessary to be more explicit, as transcendent cause, co-operates on His own plane with the finite cause; every finite action requires both God and the finite. That is true for efficiency, and for the same reason for finality, for both are necessarily connected. And, hence, when we affirm that all being tends to God more "immediately" than to aught else, we must not lose sight of the metaphysical meaning that such a statement carries.

Is it an exaggeration to say that the foregoing doctrine of Aquinas has not been appreciated as it should have been, or that, as the pivotal point on which will turn his whole doctrine of man's desire of God's vision, it has received the attention that it demands? We are convinced that it has not been sufficiently brought to bear on this latter question; nor has it received adequate attention in the recent controversies that the aforesaid question of man's desire of God's vision has evoked.

The particular case of man's desire of God is but a phase in the metaphysical return of being to God. To view it from a broader view-point than is customary appears not only as

1.—Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 2; *Ibid.*, Q. XXI, art. 2; *De Pot.*, Q. V, art. 1; *Ia.*, Q. CV, art. 2, ad 2.

2.—Cf. *Le donné révélé et la théologie*, Paris, 1910, p. 282.

something desirable, but as something entirely essential. Only in this way can we have any true idea of the Thomistic synthesis of which it forms part. One of the most important currents of interpretation, that represented by Cajetan, Suarez, and a host of modern writers, was possible because the broader metaphysical synthesis was overlooked. And if to-day there is a spontaneous attitude towards this question which isolates it, and sees in it nothing that could have an interest for philosophy, it is the result of a tradition that the great authority of Cajetan (deservedly so on many points) has helped to form.

If the question of the cooperation of God with the creature from the view-point of efficiency seems mysterious, it remains to be seen if the consideration of mind's desire for the vision of His Essence does not bring us nearer to an elucidation of that ineffable attraction that He exercises over all being. We may at least essay to give consciousness to this influence from the creature's side without thereby advocating for ourselves divine prerogatives.

Such at least is the hope that the reading of Aquinas inspires. If there is a certain sureness about the progress of his thought, it was because behind it there lay a synthesis sure of itself once it was definitely formed. It is doubtful if this synthesis was consciously in the saint's mind from the very opening years of his career. There are certain variations, not without a certain importance, to be remarked between the work of his youth, as seen in his *Commentary on the Sentences* of Petrus Lombardus (1253-1255), and that of later years, as exemplified by his *Summa Theologica*, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, the *Questiones Disputatae De Veritate*, *De Malo*, and others. In these latter works there is a consistent doctrine. And when interpreting Aquinas it is not lightly to be supposed that he has blatantly contradicted himself.

(1.) A QUESTION OF ALL TIME.

It would be a fascinating study to examine certain historical aspects of this synthesis that presents itself to us in the writings of Aquinas. It would also be very much in keeping with our modern tastes to institute such a research, for though we may not accept Renan's apotheosis of the historical method, and reduce philosophy to a mere tableau of opinions, yet a certain backward glance is characteristic of our modern outlook. We invariably wish to trace the genesis of a philosopher's thought, and mark the origins of his system.

In the case of Aquinas such a method, were it possible, would have one effect, perhaps a surprising one. For, instead of showing his debt to the past, it would, we believe, where the present problem is concerned, throw into still greater light tradition's debt to him. It would show how a problem which has beset humanity, ever since man thought of himself and of his perfection, emerged out of its erstwhile vagueness and uncertainty to the position, we might say, of a new problem, which stands out from the haze that ever enveloped it, clear-cut and in bold relief. What for philosophic tradition had been the merest dream, the vaguest aspiration, comes to consciousness in the mind of Aquinas in the form of a vital problem, on whose true solution depended henceforth the ultimate relations of the human mind to God.

Wherever philosophy arose, there was sooner or later an interest in man, and an attempted reading of his ultimate destinies. And the more we reflect on man's findings on man, the more we recognise a certain sameness that characterises them.

Humanity recognised within itself a tendency towards its perfection. That perfection soon particularised itself in a certain form. Beatitude and happiness rose up as the one compelling ideal. It presented itself as something that man desired above and beyond all else. "Every man," wrote St. Augustine, "no matter who he be, wishes to be happy.

There is no one who does not wish it, and who does not yearn after it in such a way as even to desire it above all else. Men are drawn by different attractions : one desires this, another that ; among men there are many ways of living, and among them, one prefers one way, another, another ; but no matter what may be the kind of life one chooses, it is ever the same, a happy life is what all desire.”¹

Instinctively also man felt that his perfection and his beatitude must descend from above. Philosophy as the search for wisdom already pointed to truth as having a predominantly human value. There is a palpitating page from Augustine that might well be taken to epitomise that love of truth which so characterised Greek philosophy. “We hear,” he says, “the praises of those who recline on beds of roses and other flowers, who enjoy the odour of exquisite perfumes : but what more delicious or softer than the breath of truth ? And when it inspires us do we hesitate to proclaim ourselves happy ? Others place their happiness in the harmony of voices and instruments of music . . . and we, when our souls, untampered by any noise, hear, as it were, the harmonies and eloquent silence of truth, would we seek another, a happier life ? . . . But because it is in truth that one knows and possesses the sovereign good, and because truth is wisdom, let us contemplate in it, and possess in it the sovereign good.”²

When philosophers sought where beatitude and truth were to be found their thoughts reached out to the Deity. Desiring their perfection they were already desiring God, whether they knew it or not. For every element of goodness must ultimately come from Him who is goodness itself. To desire the good is necessarily to desire God as its cause.³ It is

1.—Serm. CCCVI, 3, *Opera*, edit. Migne, V, p. 1400.

2.—*De Lib. Arbit.*, II, cap. XIII, I, p. 1260.

3.—Bonum enim aliquid est secundum quod est appetibile ; unumquodque autem appetit suam perfectionem ; perfectio autem et forma effectus est quaedam similitudo agentis, cum omne agens agit sibi simile ; unde ipsum agens est appetibile, et habet rationem boni ; hoc enim est quod de ipso appetitur, ut ejus similitudo participetur. Cum ergo Deus sit prima causa effectiva omnium, manifestum est quod ei competit ratio boni et appetibilis. Unde Dionysius attribuit bonum Deo, sicut primae causae efficienti, dicens,

characteristic of the great monumental systems of the past that they recognised in God the sovereign good of all: the *Summum Bonum*. And hence, for man to seek out consciously his relation to that perfection towards which, by a law of his being, he tended, was to endeavour to make clear his position in regard to God.

According to St. Augustine it was the sublime merit of Plato, first to have realised this. For Plato placed the end of man in a certain contemplation. As we rise from the closing pages of the *Banquet* there is a haunting memory of that eulogium of beauty pronounced by the stranger of Mantinea.¹ "Eternal beauty, unborn and imperishable, without increase or diminution, not merely beautiful in part and tarnished by slightest ugliness . . . Beauty which has no sensible form, nor countenance, nor hands, nor anything corporeal . . . absolutely invariable, identical with itself, participated by all other beauty, yet undiminished source, immutable . . . To arrive at which one must pass from the beauties of here below, and advance, ascend, as it were, by all the degrees of the hierarchy of beauty . . . from beautiful sentiments to thoughts of beauty, and from knowledge to knowledge, to that knowledge *par excellence* with no other object than beauty itself and the possession of beauty as it really is . . . If there is anything which gives to life a value, it is this contemplation of absolute beauty . . . What shall not the destiny of mortal be, to whom it is given thus to contemplate beauty without shadow, in its purity and simplicity . . . face to face, in its unique form—the beauty of God."

It has been doubted if to Plato exclusively belongs the merit of seeing in contemplation the end of man, and of focussing attention on this reaching out of humanity to God for its perfection. Greek philosophers as a whole, we may say, marked out a certain contemplation, the contemplation

quod "bonus dicitur Deus sicut ex quo omnia subsistunt."—Ia., Q. VI, art. 1. Omnia desiderant summum bonum, quia nihil est desiderabile nisi in quantum in eo similitudo summi boni invenitur.—*De Verit.*, Q. X, art. 12, ad 5.

1.—Cf. *Banquet* 211, d. 212, c. Cf. P. Lagrange, O.P., *Platon Théologien*.—*Rev. thomiste*, N.S., T. IX, (1926), p. 212-213.

of truth, as ultimate wisdom, as the ideal of all, the summit of happiness. Even before Socrates there are faint traces of such a contemplation. Already, Anaxagoras (500-428) and Heraclitus (540-480), had taught that contemplation was the end of life. And contemplation also marked the climax, the last degree of initiation in the Greek mysteries.

At least, Plato has the merit of voicing the vague aspirations of humanity after the ideal, and we are not surprised to find down through history a brilliant train of poetic minds, who sought to scale the Platonic ladder where, by initiation, the searcher after wisdom will perceive all at once a marvellous light . . . the eternal beauty, uncreated and imperishable, beauty in itself, and for itself, and of which all other beauty is but the faintest participation. "There are three kinds of men," wrote Plotinus, "there are those who satisfy themselves with things of sense, for whom the good of sense is the *summum bonum*, who see in suffering an evil, in pleasure happiness, and who employ their wits to secure one and avoid the other; heavy birds, weighed down, for having imbibed too much from earth, who cannot fly, though nature gave them wings. There are others, rising up a little, attracted to a higher beauty by that which is best in them; but impotent to look on high, of virtue having but the name, descending to baser actions that first they had essayed to shun. But there is a third kind, a race divine, endowed with superior power and penetrating glance. Their eyes have seen the splendour from on high, they have raised themselves up to that, up above, as it were, from the clouds and fogs of earth, and remaining there, despise the things of earth, and enjoy this region where truly they are at home, as after a long voyage the wanderer returns to his native country."¹

And if, as against the Gnostic, Plotinus has a word of praise for Nature,² yet with the "heavy birds" in view, no

1.—*Ennead* V, 3, 1.

2.—*Ibid.*, II, 9, 16.

doubt, he raises his voice in protest.¹ For man, to find his satisfaction in this world, is to forget the very principle of his being. It is to forget himself. Renouncing the indefinite progress of which he is capable, he renounces for ever to be himself fully ; he denies what is his inmost being—desire.²

Whether Plotinism marks a true historical development of Plato, or not, it is certain that there is the Platonic aspiration, just as later in the fifth century we can recognise it in the brilliant work of Boethius, who wrote, what may be called, the classical treatise on man's beatitude.

Boethius (470-475) in prison and misfortune, represents himself as taught by philosophy in the guise of a wondrous vision. The outstanding principles that govern beatitude appear. He is taught that the immediate object of desire is less a good than the final and sovereign good of all. The exclusion of finite goods as incapable of imparting true beatitude is then undertaken.³ But the source of all good is God.⁴ He is beatitude.⁵

There is, however, another principle bequeathed by Plato to tradition, which reveals the true significance of contemplation as the end of man. If man's perfection consisted in the contemplation of truth, and in the stretching out of mind after the eternal beauty, it has for final result a certain union with the Deity, and, in this present life, a growing resemblance to God. 'It is impossible that evil should totally disappear from this world . . . This indicates what an effort must be imposed. To get away from evil is to assimilate oneself to God in the measure possible. Now one becomes like to God by becoming just and holy in clarity of soul'.⁶

Now, no matter how we may admire these exalted principles that appear in the pages of Plato, we well may ask to what

1.—*Ibid.*, V, 5, 9.

2.—*Ibid.*, V, 1, 1.

3.—Cf. *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, lib. II, sect. 11 ; *Ibid.*, sect. 13 ; *Ibid.*, lib. II, sect. 7.

4.—*Op. cit.*, lib. I, sect. 12.

5.—*Ibid.*, lib. III, sect. 13.

6.—*Théaetetus*, 176 A. Cf. *Rep.* VI, 900, 504 ; *Laws* IV, 716.

extent Plato was really conscious of his thought. What an audacity for the finite mind to hope to gaze on the face of Beauty itself. If we wish to realise how the necessarily vague character of Plato's aspiration becomes vaguer still, we have but to consider the use of it made by Plotinus. For him "the soul enjoys the contemplation of God because it is with Him; it is unity because it is one with Him; it is less a vision than a union, a union in light, the contact of two transparent beings, two flames in one and the same brightness."¹ And if we turn to Boethius we are not less surprised to find a certain vagueness.

Having shown that God is true beatitude, with apparently invincible logic he goes on to argue, that, because beatitude is divinity itself, it is by the acquisition of divinity that man must find beatitude. As it is by the acquisition of justice that man becomes just, and by the possession of wisdom that man becomes wise, so in beatitude man becomes God-like: *Omnis igitur beatus, deus.*²

If we turn to Aristotle, it is in vain that we seek greater precision. Was it in opposition to Plato that, though also placing supreme beatitude in contemplation, the action of man's noblest faculty in contact with its noblest object, he says such a beatitude in its fullest sense is that of a God, and that man must be satisfied with mere human happiness? It is doubtful if a consistent doctrine is to be found in the Stagyrice. There were certain important consequences immanent in his view of science and in his minimising the individual. At least M. J. Chevalier has a suggestion that would be interesting, were it proved. Because the antimony of science and the individual, he says,³ resolves itself in God, it might well seem that the ideal for the individual, according

1.—Cf. R. Arnou, *Le désir de Dieu dans la philosophie de Plotin*, Paris, 1921, p. 244.

2.—*Nam quoniam beatitudinis adeptione fiunt homines beati, beatitudo vero est ipsa divinitas, divinitatis adeptione fieri beatos, manifestum est. Sed uti iustitiae adeptione iusti, sapientiae sapientes fiunt, ita divinitatem adeptos, deos fieri simili ratione necesse est. Omnis igitur beatus, deus; sed natura quidem unus, participatione vero nihil prohibet esse quam plurimos.*—*Op., cit.*, lib. II, sect. 19.

3.—*La science et le réel.—Où chercher le réel?* Paris, 1927, p. 18.

to Aristotle, would be to "immortalise himself" by absorption in God, coinciding with Him by reason, which is that which is divine in man; in a word, in dehumanising himself to find his full realisation in a complete intelligibility.

The very ambiguities that enveloped Aristotle's view of intelligence and its apparent externality to man, had certain dangers that became only too clear during the course of time. St. Thomas, we shall see, elected to see in Aristotle one who singularly minimised the meaning of beatitude, and thus it was, if we prescind from M. Chevalier's suggested interpretation, that history handed down a certain paradox on man's beatitude. On the one hand there was the view that God alone was man's beatitude, and that the deepest instincts of humanity impelled it towards Him, but the noble aspirations of a Plato or a Plotinus, whatever their truth as aspirations and as tendency, were scarcely conscious of the problem to which these very aspirations gave rise. Where they concluded that the end of man was to become a god, or God-like, in that immediate union with eternal beauty, from the very same premisses Aristotle had inferred the contrary. These philosophers felt that God was first desired, that He was desired in all, they even dreamed of seeing Him face to face. But they did not discern a new problem. It was reserved for Aquinas to discover it. For him it was to find the truth of humanity's vaguest aspirations, and place it in a new setting: the synthesis of nature and the supernatural.

It is only when we realise the complexity of things when he set to work that we can appreciate this new setting which an old problem had received. When St. Thomas appeared, the old Platonic tradition had fallen from its pristine traditions. The difficulties that were immanent in Aristotle's theory of intelligence had found a forcible expression. Worse still, there was a certain fusion between philosophers of Platonic leanings and those who favoured the Aristotelico-Averrist view of an intelligence outside of man. Where a Plato or a Plotinus could have indulged in the hopes of seeing God Himself, many an Arabic philosopher excluded the very possibility for man of ever seeing God. It was inherent

in the theory of the cascade of being, as St. Thomas knew it, that man's final hopes rested on a union with the last intelligence that had proceeded from the one.¹

Nor was that all. When first he took up teaching, he found himself in presence of a traditional interpretation of Aristotelian intellect. In his first work he says that as to Aristotle's doctrine of *intellectus agens* as a separate substance, there was general accord among philosophers.² His first manifestation of declared hostility is to be found in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259-1264).³ And, later, in the *De Unitate Intellectus* he rejects the teaching of Averroes even as the true interpretation of Aristotle. But, meanwhile, there were certain Catholic doctors, notably William of Auvergne and Roger Bacon, who favoured a doctrine of illumination,⁴ and of the *intellectus agens* as distinct and separate from that of the *intellectus possibilis*. These latter views were not without significance for the question of the possibility of the vision of God in this life.

Viewing the works of St. Thomas, therefore, as a whole, we see that the adversaries with whom he had to deal were in very various categories. There were some for whom the

1.—Cajetan suggests that the view which excluded the vision of God as impossible was not that of Avicenna. Haec opinio, iudicio meo, non est Avicennae aut philosophorum (quorum saltem prima intelligentia creata cognoscit quid est Deus, apud Avicennam, quoniam ipse est illius principium; sed haec opinio fuit aliquorum Christianorum ut puto.—*Comm.*, in Ia., Pars., Q. XII, art. 1, no. 4. Whatever may be the truth of Cajetan's view, we cannot reject the professed object of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, nor the many *rapprochements* that St. Thomas himself makes between his own view and that of Avicenna.

2.—In hoc fere omnes philosophi concordant post Aristotelem . . . quod intellectus sit substantia quaedam separata.—*Sent.*, lib. II, dist. 17, Q. II, art. 1.

3.—Quod autem haec (sc. Averrois dicta) frivola sint et impossibilia facile est videre . . . Est igitur praedicta positio contra sententiam Aristotelis et contra veritatem.—C.G., lib. II, cap. LI, LXI. Cf. M. Grabmann, *Les commentaires de saint Thomas d'Aquin sur les ouvrages d'Aristote*.—*Annales de l'Institut de Phil.*, Louvain. Tome III (1914), p. 231-281.

4.—Cf. R. Bacon, *Opus Maius* (ed. J. H. Bridges), p. 2, c. V. Et sic intellectus agens, maiores secundum philosophos, non est pars animae, sed substantia intellectiva alia et separata per essentiam ab intellectu possibili: et quia istud est necessarium ad propositi persuasionem ut ostendatur quod philosophia sit per influentiam divinae illuminationis, volo illud efficaciter probare. Cf. H. Hoffmans, Roger Bacon.—*Rév. néo-scol.*, Août (1909), p. 370-397.

vision of God was possible in this life. There were those who placed the end of man in the vision of the "separate substances," which they declared also possible in this life. But it is the advantage of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, as we have seen, that its general tenor reveals what he deemed the real danger. It came from those philosophers for whom the vision of God was declared categorically impossible,¹ and even though he confesses the difficulty of knowing their opinions in detail, that has for us a certain advantage, for it led him to give a full and continuous development to the one theme in which we are interested: the desire of the human mind to see God.

When we have thus traced the origin of a new problem for Aquinas, it is not difficult to admit that he worked under a certain Platonic inspiration. The doctrine of participation, so vague in Plato, and for which Aristotle had apparently little use, received a new value in the metaphysic of St. Thomas. The principle of perfection, which is really an application of the metaphysical doctrine of participation, receives at his hands its full development. The idea of a return of things to God, predominantly Platonic, though not exclusively so, he espoused. And the Pseudo-Denys, who had so emphasised it, he not only commended in his *De Divinis Nominibus*, but he does him honour by frequent citation.² The same may be said for Boethius, from whom he could have taken his definition of beatitude.³

For all that, it would be an error to exaggerate the Platonic influence on St. Thomas. M. Durantel certainly does so when he designates St. Thomas as a "Platonicien honteux".⁴

1.—Cf. Also *De Verit.*, Q. VII, art. 1; *Ia.*, Q. XII, art. 1, c.

2.—M. Durantel has brought together the various places where St. Thomas cites the Pseudo-Denys, in his work, *St. Thomas et le Pseudo-Denis*, Paris, 1919.

3.—Id autem est bonum, quo quis adepto, nihil ulterius desiderare queat. Quod quidem est omnium summum bonorum, cunctaque intra se bona continens: cui si quid abforet summum esse non posset, quoniam relinqueretur extrinsecus quod posset optari. Liquet igitur, esse beatitudinem statum bonorum omnium congregatione perfectum. Hunc, diverso tramite mortales omnes conantur adipisci. Est enim mentibus hominum veri boni naturaliter inserta cupiditas.—*De Cons.*, *Phil.*, lib. III, sect. 3.

4.—M. Durantel, *Le retour à Dieu*, p. 228.

"He owes as much," this author writes, "to Platonic doctrines as he does to Aristotle. He borrows from Denys, from Augustine, from Damascene, from that whole teaching of the school which was precisely inspired by Platonic thought up to Albert the Great and St. Thomas Himself".¹ Such a way of looking at things really lacks the true perspective. It does not take a sufficiently synthetic view-point.

It is certain that the philosophy of Aristotle is at the basis of Thomistic metaphysic. On the fundamental questions that separate Aristotle from Plato, St. Thomas follows Aristotle. Plato had not found an intelligible view of the being of things. He had not grasped the intelligible union of matter and form, which we have seen to be the very corner stone both of Thomistic metaphysic and Thomistic theory of knowledge. In a word, Aristotle's objections against Platonic separation of the idea from experience St. Thomas accepted whole-heartedly. Failing to find an intelligible account of things, it was natural that Platonism failed to explain the becoming it had so emphasised. Neither Plato nor Plotinus ever succeeded in getting rid of a certain imaginative element. They never found that pure metaphysical intelligibility. They were unable to grasp that intelligible union of potency and act, of essence and existence as two complementary principles, neither capable of existing as such but uniting, fusing, we might say, to stand as being and to give an intelligible account of becoming. This need of intelligibility that transcends imagination and is answered only by the strongest intellectualism separates Thomistic metaphysic from Platonism, as from every other system which seeks an imaginative compromise of an "ut quod" and an "ut quo" to render intelligible what only two principles "ut quo" can explain. If St. Thomas was, therefore, able to "borrow" from a Platonic tradition, and yet remain St. Thomas, it was because he had his own principles in virtue of which he corrected Platonism, and embodied in his own system what was best in Plato.

1.—Il doit certes aux doctrines platoniciennes autant, sinon plus, qu' à Aristote.—*Ibid.*, p. 228.

If his philosophy marked a return to Aristotle, we must also recognise that, as we shall see, where it is question of man's desire of God, he unhesitatingly rejects the views of Aristotle. Nowhere is St. Thomas more himself than when he undertakes to examine the relation of the human mind to God.

It could, therefore, be of relatively meagre interest to seek in detail his debt to the past. In John Damascene, as in Boethius, he had found a certain intuitive knowledge of God.¹ Was it, as M. Gilson points out, and indeed as the texts themselves indicate, that St. Thomas interpreted the words of Damascene to signify merely the innateness of that whereby we can reason to God's existence,² or was it that the innate knowledge that he found in Damascene was transformed into that desire of God whereby he wished to show the possibility of the divine vision?³ In reality, to such questions it is not possible to reply with a simple affirmation or negation. It is true that he denies an innate knowledge of God, and yet he admits that God is known implicitly by all in so far as He is man's beatitude.⁴ But to say that because of that we have here a transformation of the innate knowledge of Damascene into desire, would seem to us an over-simplification of things. The question of the desire of God, as St. Thomas viewed it, pervades his system. It is in the light of the whole system that we must view his particular theories. That the implicit knowledge of God in every judgement, which he admitted, has a special significance, cannot be doubted, but we shall have to delve deeply below the surface of things to seize it. In a word, the view that he puts forward of man's desire of God, just because it is part of a consistent metaphysic, is something that could not have been merely borrowed from without in any purely mechanical manner. The very search for knowledge had for St. Thomas a direct significance for our question, which had

1.—Cf. *In Sent.*, lib. III, D. XXIII, Q. I, art. 4, *Questiuncula* III.; C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXIX.

2.—E. Gilson, *La philosophie de saint Bonaventure*, Paris, p. 123.

3.—Cf. J. Durand, *Op. cit.*, p. 303.

4.—Cf. *Ia.*, Q. II, art. 1, ad 1.

not escaped his master, Albert the Great, and the aspirations of man after beatitude gave rise for him to a new problem.¹

(2.) AN APPARENT ANTINOMY.

The striking paradox of the whole matter, however, is that, while St. Thomas thus discovered a new problem, his solution has given rise to even still more intricate controversies. While he distinguishes in a masterly fashion the two orders of nature and the supernatural, he so formulates his views that for many they present the merest antinomies. Not a few believe that, by a kind of intellectual atavism, he reverts to the facile identification of beatitude with God, and thereby subscribed to the audacious aspirations of humanity, that only ignorance could have condoned.²

It is essential, because of the new situation produced and of the anxieties which many interpreters of St. Thomas experience, to see how the question really shaped itself in his mind. For that, it is necessary to realise that one of the fundamental characteristics of his whole system is the paramount distinction which he places between the two orders. One of the permanent acquisitions to Christian thought is just precisely this distinction which no one more clearly than Aquinas indicated.

The source of this distinction of the two orders we have already indicated. It is based on the fact that in God there are two aspects, two facets as it were, one of which alone is naturally turned to the weak gaze of finite intelligence which

1.—Evidently we do not wish to say that the question of nature and the supernatural was treated for the first time by St. Thomas. St. Augustine had already done so. But, as it is more and more recognised to-day that with St. Thomas begins a clear distinction of faith and reason, and as in his time the problem of nature and the supernatural took on a specially prominent character, it is true to say that for the first time did it receive not only an exhaustive attention but from a particular point of view. Viewed in regard to a purely philosophic tradition, as we have done so, it is perfectly true to say that it was a new problem, and that for St. Thomas, precisely in virtue of his hard and fast distinction between the two orders, it had a new and special significance.

2.—Cajetan does not express this opinion in so many words, but it is really his.

is capable of viewing the divine intelligibility not as it is in itself, but as it radiates through its finite manifestations. The other is the mirror where divine infinitude contemplates itself, the divine essence which is the infinite source of the intimate life of God Himself.

Nothing could be plainer than the fundamental difference between these two modes of knowledge. Naturally to contemplate the divine essence is the exclusive prerogative of God, ever present to Himself in the full comprehension of His own infinite being.¹ Such a mode of knowledge of the divine infinitely transcends that of man, as he sets out from sense, or even of the highest finite intelligence which can know of God only what his own necessarily finite essence reveals, or what a finite impressed species is capable of imparting. For this is just the source of the creature's inability of knowing God as He is in Himself, that there is nothing at its disposal to raise its thought to God except the finite, and no finite effect is capable of fully revealing the splendour of that light inaccessible which God inhabits. As long as its mode of knowledge is natural, finite intelligence, no matter what its rank in the hierarchy of perfection be, is infinitely distinct from that immediate vision of God's essence in which will consist man's final beatitude.² It works out its destiny, so far as God in His own intimate life is concerned, as the night owl in its congenital darkness.

It is impossible, says St. Thomas, that any created intellect should naturally see God. For knowledge, according to the favourite axiom of the schools, takes place *admodum cognoscentis*. It follows that if the mode of being proper to the object to be known entirely transcends the manner of being proper to the knower that it is impossible that such a knowing subject should connaturally know such an object. To know the divine being belongs only to God naturally, for in no

1.—Videre autem Deum per ipsam divinam essentiam, est proprium naturae divinae—C.G., lib. III, cap. LII.

2.—Videre Deum per essentiam, in quo ultima beatitudo rationalis creaturae consistit, est supra naturam cujuslibet intellectus creati.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 2.

finite being is there that identity of act with itself which characterises God.¹

Just as God, complete in Himself, had no need of creation, and if He did evoke from nothingness created being, it was simply His royal munificence that would spread around it the rays of its essential goodness, so for the same reason, but in a more striking manner, if He stoops down to elevate the creature to an end beyond his natural powers, to the very vision of Himself, it can only be in virtue of a most astounding condescension. And if the very natural activity of the creature demands the constant cooperation of God, likewise if the creature is to enter on its new life, if it is really to be put in the way of coming to its intended destiny, it is equally clear that some new principle, a new creation as it were, is required effectively to orientate the finite being towards a term transcending its natural powers: the beatific vision.²

1.—Impossibile est quod aliquis intellectus creatus per sua naturalia essentiam Dei videat. Cognitio enim contingit secundum quod cognitum est in cognoscente. Cognitum autem est in cognoscente secundum modum cognoscentis. Unde cujuslibet cognoscentis cognitio est secundum modum naturae suae. Si igitur modus essendi alicujus rei cognitae excedat modum naturae cognoscentis, oportet quod cognitio illius rei sit supra naturam illius cognoscentis . . . Relinquitur ergo quod cognoscere ipsum esse subsistens sit connaturale soli intellectui divino, et quod sit supra facultatem naturalem cujuslibet intellectus creati, quia nulla creatura est suum esse sed habet esse participatum.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 4. Omnis autem cognitio quae est secundum modum substantiae creatae, deficit a visione divinae essentiae, quae in infinitum excedit omnem substantiam creatam.—Ia-IIae., Q. V, art. 5.

2.—Sed ulterius, ultimus finis hominis in quadam veritatis cognitione constitutus est, quae naturalem facultatem ipsius excedit, ut scilicet ipsam primam veritatem videat in seipsa . . . Hoc autem inferioris creaturae non competit ut scilicet ad finem pervenire possint, qui eorum facultatem naturalem excedat . . . Ea enim quae sunt ad finem necesse est fini esse proportionata. Si igitur homo ordinatur ad finem qui ejus facultatem naturalem excedit, necesse est ei aliquid auxilium divinitus adhiberi supernaturale per quod tendat in finem.—C.G., lib. III, cap. CXLVII. Oportet etiam quod ad hoc quod homo ordinetur in bonum vitae aeternae, quaedam inchoatio ipsius fiat in eo cui repromittitur.—*De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 2. Sed ultimam beatitudinem, quae facultatem naturae excedit, angeli non statim in principio suae creationis habuerunt; quia haec beatitudo non est aliquid naturae, sed naturae finis. Et ideo non statim eam a principio debuerunt habere.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1. Necesse est enim, cum omne agens agat propter finem, quod omnis causa convertat suos effectus ad suum finem: et ideo, cum secundum ordinem agentium sive moventium sit ordo finium, necesse est quod ad ultimum finem convertatur homo per motionem primi moventis.—Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 6.

Depending, as it does, on God Himself to decide on such an end and to impart this sublime principle of divine life¹ that is lacking to the creature, it follows that the fact of such a destiny being really intended for man is beyond any finite intelligence's power of surmising. For who hath been God's councillor? Man has to await the divine promulgation.

That such, in effect, is the definite teaching of Aquinas is clear, we may presume, from our exposition of his attitude, as seen in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. We have seen him present to the adversary a certain block of doctrine, and demand his attention in virtue of the moral necessity of a revelation. A striking confirmation is to be had from a close comparison of the Saint's attitude in his *Commentary on the Sentences* with that of a work written at least ten years later, the *De Malo*.

The question arose of the destiny of children who die without having received Baptism. These children, according to St. Thomas, in their natural felicity enjoy all knowledge that the natural reason, left to itself, is capable of acquiring.² Further, in his earlier work, he grants them a certain knowledge of the supernatural, and explains their felicity by their resignation to the divine Will.

Some hold, he remarks, that such children have a perfect knowledge of those things that come within the scope of natural knowledge, and are furthermore aware that they are deprived of eternal life, the reason of their exclusion being also known to them. They are not for all that afflicted, for no prudent person grieves over the loss of that to which he is not sufficiently ordered.³

1.—That grace is a participation in divine life, he repeats frequently. Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. CX, arts. 3 and 4; *Ibid.*, Q. CXII, art. 1; *Ibid.*, Q. CXIII, art. 9; *Ibid.*, Q. CXIV, art. 3; IIa-IIae., Q. XIX, art. 7; IIIa., Pars., Q. II, art. 10, ad 1; *De Verit.*, Q. XXVII, art. 7.

2.—Illae animae ab onere corporis absolutae, ea saltem cognoscunt quae ratione investigari possunt, et multa plura.—*Sent.*, lib. II, dist. 33, Q. II, c.

3.—Et ideo alii dicunt quod cognitionem perfectam habebunt eorum quae naturali cognitioni subjacent, et vita aeterna se privatos esse cognoscunt et causam quare ab ea exclusi sunt; nec tamen ex hoc aliquo modo affligentur: quod qualiter esse possit videndum est. Sciendum ergo quod ex hoc quod aliquis caret eo quod suam perfectionem excedit, non affligitur si sit rectae

In his later work, *De Malo*, he modifies the solution given in the *Commentary on the Sentences*. His opinion here he describes as a mean between two other solutions. One of these solutions consists in emphasising the ignorance of these unbaptised children to the extent of affirming that they do not even know that they were created for beatitude; the other, denying such ignorance, explains the absence of affliction by the disposition of their wills. Obviously, the latter opinion is the same as that put forward by the saint himself in his previous work. These two opinions, however, can be united, he says, and a mean solution becomes feasible. Thus, these children are in possession of such natural knowledge as reason is capable of acquiring, and hence they know, he says, that they are created for beatitude, and that beatitude consists in the acquisition of the perfect good. But that this perfect good is that glory of the saints, of which St. Paul speaks (I Cor. ii, 9), they are not aware, and hence are not afflicted. In possession of natural knowledge, they are devoid of that knowledge planted in us by faith.¹

rationis; sed tantum ex hoc quod caret eo ad quod aliquo modo proportionatus fuit: sicut nullus sapiens homo affligitur de hoc quod non potest volare sicut avis, vel quia non est rex vel imperator, cum sibi non sit debitum: affligeretur autem, si privaretur eo ad quod habendum aliquomodo aptitudinem habuit.—*Sent.*, lib. II, dist. XLIV, Q. II, art. 2.

1.—Quidam enim dicunt, quod animae puerorum cum originali decedentium sunt in tantis tenebris ignorantiae constitutae, quod nesciunt se ad beatitudinem esse factas, nec aliquid circa hoc cogitant, et ideo nullam patiuntur de hoc afflictionem. Sed hoc inconvenienter . . . Et ideo alii assignant causam hujus quod non affliguntur, ex dispositione voluntatis eorum . . . Quia ergo pueri post mortem sciunt se nunquam potuisse illam gloriam coelestem adipisci, ex ejus carentia non dolebunt. *Possumus tamen, utrumque conjungentes, mediam viam tenere, ut dicamus quod animae puerorum naturali cognitione non carent, qualis debetur animae separatae secundum suam naturam; sed carent supernaturali cognitione, quae hic in nobis per fidem plantatur . . . Pertinet autem ad naturalem cognitionem quod anima sciat se propter beatitudinem creatam et quod beatitudo consistit in adeptione perfecti boni; sed quod illud bonum perfectum ad quod homo factus est, sit illa gloria quam sancti possident est supra cognitionem naturalem.*—*De Malo*, Q. V, art. 3. The significance of this text as compared with that of the sentences was first pointed out in *Civiltà Cattolica*, Series XVI, vol. X, May (1897), *Rivista della Stampa*, pp. 322-326. It was on the occasion of the appearance of Joachim Sestili's well-known work, *De naturali intelligentis animae capacitate atque appetitu intuendi divinam essentiam*: Theologica disquisitio Romae, typis A et S Festa, 1896. More recently P. Brisbois, S.J., has returned to it, *Désir naturel et vision de Dieu.*—*Nouvelle rev., théol.*, tome 54, no. 2, Feb. (1927).

Accordingly, nothing could be clearer than the distinction which St. Thomas places between the two orders of nature and the supernatural. The absolute transcendence of the divine life and of that participation in it, which man's elevation to the vision of God would suppose, is assured. Man cannot of himself suspect that God intends to elevate him to such a sublime destiny; if the Saint will speak of a natural desire of it, such a desire is of itself quite inefficacious; man, as long as he remains in the natural order, is infinitely distant from the immediate vision of God. On this point, which places beyond all doubt the distinction of nature and the supernatural, the entire gratuity of such a destiny, there can be no doubt as to the Saint's mind. He epitomises his doctrine in a text which is strong and significant. Such a good, he says as that of the beatific vision, entirely exceeds the proportions of human nature, *since so far as its obtainment is concerned, nature's powers are quite incapable either of thinking it or of desiring it*; the divine liberality alone could promise it.¹

But if that were all, there would be comparatively little difficulty. The fact is that, while St. Thomas so distinguishes the two orders, and declares that the vision of God is beyond man's natural powers, he does not cease to repeat that there is in man a natural desire to see God.² And in the midst of his strongest affirmations of the transcendence of such a vision he does not hesitate to throw in the disturbing clause.³ But what is even still more disturbing is that he frequently, very frequently, declares that such a natural desire cannot

1.—*Aliud est bonum hominis naturae humanae proportionem excedens, quia ad ipsum obtinendum vires naturales non sufficiunt, nec ad cogitandum vel desiderandum; sed ex sola divina liberalitate homini repromittitur.*—*De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 2.

2.—*Nos autem, quantumcumque sciamus Deum esse, et alia quae supra dicta sunt, non quiescimus desiderio, sed adhuc desideramus Deum per essentiam suam cognoscere.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. L.

3.—*Quamvis homo naturaliter inclinetur in finem ultimum, non potest tamen naturaliter illum consequi, sed solum per gratiam et hoc est propter eminentiam illius finis.*—*In Boethium De Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 4, ad 5. *Visio seu scientia beata est quodammodo supra naturam animae rationalis.*—*IIIIa.*, Q. IX, art. 2, ad 3.

be "vain".¹

It is not often that in philosophical discussions a distinction gives rise to a greater complexity, for it is just intended to resolve a certain vagueness that hangs over the question under discussion. But when St. Thomas goes on to distinguish two ends of man,² it would seem that we are never to get to the end of the complexities to which it gives rise. For granting this distinction, that of the natural end and that of the supernatural end, he passes from one to the other, apparently without the slightest consciousness of the difficulties that such a passage must create if we speak of both ends as naturally desired. It is reasonable enough, one would say, to hold that God is desired naturally by man as the principle of his natural perfection.³ Yet we cannot forget that St. Thomas also speaks of a natural desire of

1.—In ipso enim est ultima perfectio rationalis creaturae, quod est ei principium essendi. In tantum enim unumquodque perfectum est in quantum ad suum principium attingit . . . Inest enim homini naturale desiderium cognoscendi causam, cum intuetur effectum; et ex hoc admiratio in hominibus consurgit. Si igitur intellectus rationalis creaturae pertingere non possit ad primam causam rerum remanebit inane desiderium naturae. Unde concedendum est quod beati Dei essentiam videant.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 1. Quantumcumque autem aliquis proficiat intelligendo secundum praedictum modum cognitionis, quo a sensu scientiam percipimus, adhuc remanet naturale desiderium ad alia cognoscenda . . . Unde semper remanet naturale desiderium respectu perfectionis cognitionis. Impossibile est autem naturale desiderium esse vanum.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIV.

2.—Nomine beatitudinis intelligitur ultima perfectio rationalis seu intellectualis naturae; et inde est quod naturaliter desideratur, quia unumquodque naturaliter desiderat suam ultimam perfectionem. Ultima autem perfectio rationalis seu intellectualis naturae est duplex. Una quidem quam potest assequi virtute suae naturae; et haec quodammodo beatitudo vel felicitas dicitur. Unde et Aristoteles perfectissimam hominis contemplationem, qua optimum intelligibile, quod est Deus, contemplari potest in hac vita, dicit esse ultimam hominis felicitatem. Sed supra hanc felicitatem est alia felicitas, quam in futuro expectamus qua videbimus Deum sicuti est. Quod quidem est supra cujuslibet intellectus creati naturam.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 2; Ia., Q. XII, art. 4; Ia., Q. CIX, art. 6; IIa-IIae, Q. XXVI, art. 3.

3.—Amor summi boni, prout est principium esse naturalis, inest nobis a natura; sed prout est objectum illius quae totam capacitatem naturae creatae excedit, non inest nobis a natura, sed est supra naturam.—*De Caritate*, Q. Un., art. 2, ad 16. Naturalis motus voluntatis est principium omnium eorum quae volumus. Naturalis autem inclinatio voluntatis est ad id quod est conveniens secundum naturam. Et ideo si aliquid sit supra naturam, voluntas in id fieri non potest, nisi ab aliquo alio supernaturali principio adjuta.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 2.

God's vision and desire in his metaphysical vocabulary signifies tendency.¹

It is when this distinction of the two ends is uppermost in our minds that we come across other statements which prevent us from settling down to an easy solution. If it is true that something objective corresponds to this distinction, yet the transcendental capacities of intellect and will are ever present to his mind, and, accordingly, we cannot be too surprised to hear him say that outside of God's vision there is nothing which could fully satisfy such faculties, or appease their desire for perfection.² And to bring to a climax, as it were our uneasiness, the Saint, with an air of finality, lays down a striking alternative. If it is impossible for intelligent beings to come to the vision of God, then either of two things : man will never have true beatitude, or his beatitude must be found outside God.³

In presence of the apparent antinomy which thus arises out of St. Thomas' treatment of a two-fold end of human nature, many attitudes suggest themselves, as we may infer from the very different interpretations that in the course of time his doctrine has received. But there is one attitude which must be resolutely ruled out. We have already seen a certain ambiguity in the distinction between the theological and philosophical view-point as emphasised by Cajetan.⁴ But what we have now in mind is that attitude of those who, while admitting in a more or less indifferent manner that speculatively St. Thomas was able to distinguish the two

1.—Cf. C.G., lib. III, passim; *De Verit.*, Q. VIII, art. 1; *De Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 4; *Sent.*, lib. IV, Dist 49, 1, 1 and 2; Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 8; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1.

2.—*Impossibile est beatitudinem hominis esse in aliquo creato. Beatitudo enim est bonum perfectum, quod totaliter quietat appetitum; alioquin non esset ultimus finis, si adhuc restaret aliquid appetendum.*—Ia-IIae., Q. II, art. 8.

3.—*Si ergo creatura rationalis in sua perfectissima visione non perveniret ad videndam divinam essentiam, beatitudo ejus non esset ipse Deus, sed aliquid sub Deo; quod esse non potest.*—*De Verit.*, Q. VIII, art. 1. *Cum enim ultima beatitudo hominis in altissima ejus operatione consistat, quae est operatio intellectus, si nunquam essentiam Dei videre potest intellectus creatus, vel nunquam beatitudinem obtinebit, vel in alio ejus beatitudo consistet quam in Deo.*—Ia., Q. XII, art. 1.

4.—See Part I, Chap. III.

orders of nature and grace, hold that in practice it is impossible to say when he is speaking as a theologian or as a philosopher. "The scholastics knew," writes M. Bainvel "and at times remarked, that there are two distinct domains, that of nature and that of the supernatural . . . but in the concrete and in practice, and without the slightest scruple, they combined that which belonged to nature considered in itself with what belongs to nature in the state in which we find ourselves at present . . . it has been asked if the second part of the *Summa* envisaged the natural man, or man as raised to the supernatural. St. Thomas would have probably replied that he was occupied with man such as he appears to all, with his exigencies and natural appetites, but who has been gratuitously elevated in his nature and in his faculties to the supernatural . . . At any rate it was thus that he proceeded, as a consequence here and there something confused and undecided; it is not clear to what precisely in the real and concrete order the great principles of the master apply, nor in what sense precisely they are to be understood. The truth is that on this point there has been a theological progress".¹ A similar view was put forward by G. Tyrrell.² "St. Thomas considered man," he wrote, "historically, *de facto*, established with a coordination to the supernatural state, without its being necessary in the abstract that it should have been so." "The hypothetical conception of pure nature," he adds, "had not yet become explicit for theological thought."

It is scarcely necessary to remark, as against the latter opinion that St. Thomas too clearly distinguished nature and the supernatural not to have entertained the conception of pure nature. M. Gilson, whose researches on the general question of Thomistic attitude in the domains of philosophy and theology are well-known, marks the precise significance of the Alberto-Thomistic movement as arising out of its attitude on this very question. "Undoubtedly," he says, "St. Thomas remains a theologian and his interpretation of

1.—Bainvel, *Nature et surnaturel*, Paris, 1903, ch. IV, p. 142.

2.—G. Tyrrell, *Lex Orandi*, 1904, Introd. p. 27.

the universe is religious and christian, but that which is completely changed with the appearance of his point of view is the conception of nature, which the supernatural perfects and transfigures. What is new in Thomism is that, anxious to lead man even to his highest destinies, this doctrine never argues, *as if these final destinies, to be ulteriorly accessible, should already be, as it were, more than half realised*".¹

Nor is the practical difficulty of knowing when St. Thomas speaks from a purely philosophic point of view insuperable. If the arguments he puts forward are seen to be metaphysically necessary, we need not have his word for it that he is talking as a metaphysician. Let us suppose for instance his following argument, which is not without a pertinent interest for the present question. The human soul, he argues, as separate from the body, possessing a certain universal knowledge of natural sensible things, is not thereby fully reduced to act, because to know in such a vague and general manner is not a perfect mode of knowledge.² What has the historical conception of humanity to do with such an argument?

But, at least, it will be said, St. Thomas' preoccupations are not ours of the modern world. How frequently has not this been put forward in recent controversies? "The error against which St. Thomas wrote," says P. Mulard, "was not that of the present day".³ "Thomists have before them," he says, "adversaries who since the sixteenth century, and even before it, until now, apply themselves to the reduction of the distance that separates the two orders." For St. Thomas it would have been a matter of battling against adversaries who made a breach and impassible chasm between the two orders, whereas for modern theologians, since Baius denied all distinction between them, the question is rather to show the distinction of the two orders, and that the supernatural is not, as modernism asserted, a mere emanation from the depths of nature itself.

1.—*Etudes de philosophie médiévale*, p. 123.

2.—*De Anima*, Quæst Unica, art. 18, ad 1.

3.—Désir naturel de connaître et vision béatifique.—*Rev. des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIV (1925), pp. 5-19.

Is there no conceivable view-point then from which a certain resemblance may be found between the treatment of St. Thomas and that which the changed circumstances of modern times have necessitated? It seems to us that not only does such a view-point exist, but that it imposes itself forcibly on our attention. For there are just two ways of destroying the supernatural: by unduly elevating the natural, or by unduly lowering the supernatural; the net result is the same. For anarchy, according to a happy word of G. K. Chesterton, may arise, either from a riot of the natural, or of the supernatural. What happens then? The modern attempt is that of unduly lowering the supernatural; the ancient was that of raising the natural and seeking in it the full and saturating development of man's capacities.

If we remember this, a new light may dawn on the exhaustive treatment of the question by St. Thomas. Fundamentally, the question of nature and the supernatural is ever the same: to secure at once the transcendence of the supernatural and its fundamental harmony with nature, which it is said to perfect. And those who follow the Angelic Doctor in pointing out the distinction of the two orders, must follow him when he delineates their harmony. Otherwise, they are doomed to see all in false perspective, and remain in a futile wonder, which does credit neither to St. Thomas nor to themselves, before the apparent antinomy of mind's natural desire of a supernatural end.

(3.) HARMONY OF NATURE AND SUPERNATURAL.

To this harmony that reigns between nature and the supernatural, St. Thomas introduces his readers in one synthetic text. "In the hierarchy of coordinated natures," he says, "we find that two elements concur in the interests of perfection. One of these characterises the particular nature's own tendency, the other derives from some superior nature . . . Rational nature alone, however, may be said to have a certain immediate relation to God, for while other things participate in the divine goodness in being, as is the case

with the inanimate, or in life and in knowledge of the particular as characterises the sensitive creation, are limited in their outlook to the concrete, the particular, intelligence has for horizon the universal. In so far as it grasps the universal meaning of goodness and of being it has a certain immediate relation to the universal principle of being. The perfection of the rational nature is not narrowed down to that which belongs to it by nature, but also derives from a certain supernatural participation in the divine goodness. And hence, it has been said that the ultimate beatitude of man is to be had in a certain supernatural vision of God".¹

In the foregoing text we have a magnificent epitome of the Saint's doctrine of the economy of the whole creation. Its opening phrase points to the Saint's preoccupation to retain a harmony throughout all being. His was assuredly a grandiose picture of the harmony and continuity of creation. Everywhere he had marked the acquisition of God by the creature in ever-growing perfection. He had seen the aspiration of the lower orders aided, and carried on, by the higher, and this bending down of the higher to uplift the lower, he conceived, in no way did violence to the inferior nature, seeing that it was an instrument for a further perfection of which, left to itself, it was incapable.² He had found, as it were, that the aspiration of all being was greater than its realisation. There is ever hovering on the horizon the Divine Magnet which attracts all, and if the finite seems satisfied with its immediate realisations, yet there is hidden hope, and a tendency that transcends such proximate results. *The tendency of nature, says St. Thomas, remains unsatisfied.*³ Even in the inanimate this tendency points upwards; it is unexhausted in its effort to capture for itself a greater participation in being and in the goodness which comes from God. The ineffable cooperation of God as final cause imprints on the finite an aspiration and an expansiveness that is not saturated by proximate realisation.

1.—IIa-IIae., Q. II, art. 3.

2.—*De Pot.*, Q. IV, art. 1, ad 20; *Ibid.*, Q. VI, art. 1, ad 17.

3.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

Within the order of the finite, in the created system of things, we have an inkling of this expansiveness. We see all being linked up in a common aspiration. It is inconceivable that things should be ordered to a common end without being ordered among themselves. It is this internal harmony of creation which allows the higher orders stoop down, as it were, to impart to lower beings their complementary perfection. Nature, we have seen, implores its appointed remedy, mind, to ease its breast of that divine discontent which it derives from its participation in being, and to express for it the inexpressible.

We must recognise in things, says St. Thomas, a two-fold potentiality. On the one hand there is that potentiality which is in possession of all that it requires to find its realisation. On the other, there is a potentiality which demands the cooperation of some external agent for its perfection. The former potentiality specifies the being's own operative capacity. It traces the limits of its powers of action. Yet, such a realisation would not exhaust all its possibilities, if we envisage the possible influence of some superior agent. And hence, that realisation of which it is capable by its own effort could not petrify once and for all the aspiration of being's nature. It does not afford a final indication of all the perfection of which such a nature is capable. To cite his own homely example: "That a shrub become a tree is quite in keeping with the very effort of its own nature, but that a shrub become a ladder, something else is required. And yet its limited capacity of becoming merely a tree did not prevent its being worked on by man to be fashioned into a ladder." "Now," he says, "such is the case of man in regard to the supernatural".¹

This brings us, naturally, to the second point of his text. "It is just man's prerogative," he says, "that, in virtue of intelligence and will, he enjoys a certain immediate relation to God." If within the order of the relative he saw a certain cooperation, for man, whose horizon is the unlimited object of being and truth and goodness, there is an expansiveness

1.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIV.

which goes out, as it were, to the very principle of perfection. Man is open on the infinite ; he is capable of a perfection which may come from God Himself. God is not to be looked upon as entirely and radically outside the power of intellect in the same way that sound is beyond the power of sight.¹ To such an extent is this true, that supposing for a moment the necessity of some new principle, wherewith the finite mind may hope to attain to the immediate possession of God, such a principle would not be so much the cause of the end as such, as the means of attaining this end.²

We thus begin to surmise what this immediate relation of intelligence signifies for St. Thomas. Intelligence for him is the faculty of being, just as will is the faculty of being considered as good. They are faculties of the universal, of the transcendental, for being as such is illimited. From this he infers a certain "proportionability" where the transcendent, God, is concerned.

The faculties of intelligence and will give to the rational creature an horizon infinitely beyond that of the inanimate or sensitive creation. They mark the human mind with the seal of a divine resemblance. Man is "capable" of God, that is, of being elevated through God's own action to the vision of His essence, because so endowed the human soul is the image of God.

It is true that in a general sense the possibility of being elevated to a participation in the supernatural action of God is not the exclusive privilege of intelligent beings.³ Accordingly the obediential capacity that St. Thomas finds in all created being in regard to God's action must ultimately be connected with a common characteristic of the finite as such. This common character, as we have frequently insisted, is the distinction of essence and existence, of potency and act. The finite as such is that which is in potency in regard to God ; the obediential capacity is reducible to this potency of the creature to be acted on by God.

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LV.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XIX, art. 10, ad 1.

3.—Cf. IIIa., Q. IV, art. 1, ad 1.

While thus finding in the finite the ultimate source of its obediential capacity, we are not prevented from seeing that within the sphere of the finite itself this capacity may assume different forms. The proof of this is that it would be a contradiction in terms for the inanimate, while remaining inanimate, to be elevated to the vision of God. God, to use a scriptural expression, may make out of the stones of the wayside children to Abraham, but they will have ceased thereby to be stones. It is a common characteristic of the finite which receives different forms according to the different finite natures of which there may be question. In the rational creature it has its own proper modality, as it were. The human soul, St. Thomas held, was naturally "capable" of grace and, made in the image of God, it was *capax Dei per gratiam*.¹ He recognised in the intellectual nature as such a characteristic reason for its own proper obediential capacity.

Yet we must remember that when St. Thomas spoke of this capacity he was viewing the rational nature in reference to what it might become under the action of God. He was really pointing to the natural inability of the finite intelligence to see God if left to its own natural forces, while at the same time vindicating for the rational nature, as opposed to the lower orders, the capacity for being elevated to such a destiny. While recognising in the intelligent being the sign of its possible elevation, he did not identify the obediential capacity with the rational nature simply speaking. There was for him necessarily the reference to a becoming which entailed not only the nature itself, but the action of God.² Hence, for

1.—Naturaliter anima est gratiae capax ; eo enim ipso quod facta est ad imaginem Dei est capax Dei per gratiam.—Ia-IIae., Q. CXIII, art. 10. Visio seu scientia beata est quodammodo supra naturam animae rationalis, in quantum scilicet propria virtute ad eam pervenire non potest. Alio modo est secundum naturam ipsius, in quantum scilicet secundum naturam suam est capax ejus, prout scilicet est ad imaginem Dei facta.—IIa., Q. IX, art. 2, ad 3.

2.—Duplex capacitas attendi potest in humana natura : una quidem secundum ordinem potentiae naturalis, quae a Deo semper impletur, qui dat unicuique rei secundum suam capacitatem naturalem ; alia vero secundum ordinem divinae potentiae, cui omnis creatura obedit ad nutum.—IIa., Q. I, art. 3, ad 3. Cf. *De Pot.*, Q. I, art. 3, ad 1 ; *Ibid.*, Q. VI, art. 1, ad 18 ; *De Virtut.*, in comm., art. 10, ad 13 ; *De Verit.*, Q. VIII, art. 4, ad 13 ; *Ibid.*, Q. XXIX, art. 3, ad 3.

him, it was a real capacity and a passive power. It is necessary to bear in mind this transcendental reference of the obediential capacity, as there is always danger when confronted with the privileged position of the rational as opposed to the irrational creation in regard to the vision of God, to over emphasise the active aspect of the human intelligence. We must not confound operative (active and passive) powers with the *potentia obedientialis* which, implying a transcendental relation to God, is passive.¹ Thus endowed with intellect and will, which are faculties of the transcendental, rational nature has a "capacity" for God; intelligence, we may say, is "capable" of God because it is capable of being.

If intelligence is thus, as St. Thomas puts it, the faculty of the universal, it is seen immediately that its objective content goes beyond the individual. Statically considered, this content is capable of being formally universalised when referred to the individuals that are contained within its denotation. But there is a dynamic sense which alone fully explains the significance of intelligence as the faculty of the universal, or better, as faculty of the transcendental.

It is this sense that will aid us to rejoin the *potentia obedientialis* as understood by St. Thomas. For to discover this potency we have but to find in the intellectual nature as such that which corresponds to that common characteristic of the finite which, we have said, is the ultimate reason of the said potency. Now this aspect of intelligence St. Thomas throws into relief in a text which is an apt commentary on the text we have chosen to epitomise the relations of mind to God. "Human intelligence," he writes, "is naturally in potency for certain intelligible objects, such as are capable of being intellected by means of the active intellect, for that is the innate principle by means of which, as knowing beings, we are said to be reduced to act. It is impossible that our ultimate end be realised in such a manner, for it is the rôle of intellect to render the phantasm, which is only potentially

1.—*De Verit.*, Q. XVI, art. 1, ad 13.

intelligible, to be actually intellected. The phantasm, however, comes from sense. And that our ultimate end be realised in that way is impossible, for once the final end is attained natural desire is saturated "¹.

St. Thomas could have in no better way expressed the dynamism that is implied in intelligence where its adequate object is concerned. For if being, the transcendental, is the adequate object of intelligence, it follows, dynamically the capacities of mind are unexhausted, except by the illimited. Mind is such that of itself it is unable to acquire all the perfection of which it is "capable." It is ever in potency where Infinite Act is concerned, and, hence, the rational nature has an obediencial capacity for a perfection which God alone can impart.

1.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIV.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SOLUTION.

IT may seem ambitious to hope for a single principle wherewith to solve the question of man's desire of God's vision. Yet, the search for such a principle imposes itself. Metaphysics, as the science of being, has to do with the necessary ; a rigorous conclusion therein is secured only by a necessary argument. "In speculative matters," says St. Thomas, "the middle term, that which perfectly demonstrates the conclusion, is unique ; of probable middle terms there is no end".¹

The required principle, we believe, the Saint himself has embodied in the following text : "To God alone, by right of nature, belongs perfect beatitude, since for him to be is to be perfectly happy. For the creature to possess beatitude is not natural, but its final end".²

By an analysis of this text we hope to show that, according to St. Thomas, there is but one really final end, which consists in the immediate possession of God ; that the conception of a natural end is something relatively final ; and that as it is only the absolutely final end can impart to man all the perfection of which he is "capable," there is in man a natural desire of God's vision, according to the dictum of Aquinas that all being desires its ultimate perfection.³

The principal opponent of this interpretation is Cajetan. If this particular commentator's exposition of Aquinas on this particular question is no longer accepted in its original form,⁴ it is to be remarked that his position has a fundamental

1.—Ia., Q. XLVII, art. 1, ad 3.

2.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 4.

3.—Nomine beatitudinis intelligitur ultima perfectio rationalis seu intellectualis naturae ; et inde est quod naturaliter desideratur quia unumquodque naturaliter desiderat suam ultimam perfectionem.—Ia., Pars., Q. LXII, art. 1. Cf. *Ibid.*, Q. LXXVIII, art. 1, ad 3 ; Q. LXXXVII, art. 4 ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, l.

4.—Cf. A. Gardeil, *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique*, Paris 1927, p. 283.

significance. He represents an extremely minimalist reading of Aquinas; his position is such as to render it popularly acceptable; it is what may be styled a facile solution.

St. Thomas, we have seen, distinguished a two-fold beatitude for man, that which he is capable of realising by his own natural forces on the one hand, and on the other, that which through a free gift of God is imparted to him in the vision of Himself. These two beatitudes St. Thomas constantly designates, the one as imperfect, the other as perfect; the latter, moreover, is that alone which merits the name of beatitude strictly speaking. "Man's beatitude is two-fold—one imperfect, the other perfect—which realises the true essence of beatitude. Imperfect beatitude is merely a participation in true beatitude".¹ Cajetan is commenting on this text when he announces the general lines of his own interpretation, and where he marks his divergency from St. Thomas. "For in so speaking of the two beatitudes," complains Cajetan, "there is a certain fluctuation in the Saint's thought. He passes from beatitude as such, that is perfect beatitude, simply speaking, to beatitude as it should appertain to man." "For," he adds, "though perfect beatitude may consist in the supreme union with God, yet the perfect beatitude of such an insignificant creature as puny man, consists in a certain conjunction, that is, a proportionate one with the first principle. Man's perfect happiness should be said to consist in that knowledge of God which he is able to gather from his connatural objects".²

According to Cajetan, therefore, a full and saturating perfection is within the creature's natural horizon. Not only that, but such a perfection is all that can come within the domain of its aspiration. Nature may find, as it were,

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 6.

2.—In eodem sexto articulo dubium occurrit commune sexto, septimo, octavo, circa processum litterae: quoniam digredi videtur a perfecto beatitudine simpliciter ad perfectam beatitudinem hominis. Licet enim perfecta beatitudo simpliciter consistit in suprema conjunctione ad summum simpliciter: *perfecta tamen beatitudo talis rei infimae qualis est homo consistit in conjunctione qualicumque, idest sibi proportionata.*—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 6, no. 5 (*Opera Omnia*, Leonine ed., Vol. VI). The same doctrine to be found in his comm. on I-IIae., Q. III, art. 7: *Perfectio tamen ultima intellectus talis, puta hominis, sufficit quod sit verum tale.*

within the closed system of a natural perfection all that it can reach of itself, or desire. Man is such a being that a natural perfection would fill up the measure, not only of his natural forces, but of his aspiration, and of his desire.

And hence, if there is to be a question of anything beyond the natural dynamism of the creature, which is arrested in the self-sufficiency of a natural development, it must be for some extrinsic reason. It is because *de facto* man has been ordained by God to a more sublime end, the vision of Himself. Just as we designate as natural that which proceeds from an innate principle, so we may designate as natural that desire of celestial felicity which springs from nature elevated to the new order of grace.¹ Accordingly if St. Thomas is able to speak of God as final end and ultimate perfection, it is because as a theologian he considers the creature as ordered to this end by God.²

A preliminary remark suggests itself from the view-point of the supernatural. If, as Cajetan suggests, nature is capable of its fullest perfection purely from its own resources, if nature is, as it were, a closed system with a finality which finds its fullest realisation within itself, if it can find within itself the means of reaching its full development and of appeasing the tendency of its being, how can there be any harmony between such a nature and the supernatural? The supernatural does not destroy nature, reiterates St. Thomas, but perfects it. But if the natural end can saturate all the tendency of the intellectual nature, how can the supernatural be looked upon as perfecting, and not destroying such a nature?.³ Many who defend the distinction of the two

1.—Naturalis appetitus appellatur qui provenit a principio indito, secundum superadjectum divinae gratiae ordinem, ut enim locutio naturalis est homini a principiis naturalibus, ita appetere caelestis patriae felicitatem naturale est homini ex principiis supernaturalibus. Opusculum ad fratrem Jacobum, *Opuscula*, tome III, 7.

2.—Ad hoc quod de homine dupliciter possumus loqui. Et sic procul dubio dicendum esset quod sufficit nos esse beatos ut homines, non simpliciter; Alio modo secundum id quod homo est divinitus institutus. Et sic, quia est ut summum bonum intelligeret ordinatus est ad beatitudinem perfectam simpliciter.—In I-IIae., Q. III, art. 6, no. 6.

3.—This view-point has been well exposed by D. Gommairus Laporta, O.S.B., in his closely reasoned article, *Natuur en Genade*.—*Onsgeloof*, XII, no. II, p. 434 sqq.

orders forget that that is not the only thing to be envisaged, and, consequently, present only one aspect of the Thomistic doctrine. But really does the interpretation of Cajetan give even one aspect of the Saint's doctrine faithfully? Remaining within the limits of Thomistic interpretation, can we so interpret his distinction of two ends, as to subscribe to the theory that nature of itself aspires to a natural perfection which would finally saturate a being capable of all being, all truth, all goodness? A development of the fecund principle which we have selected, that for the finite perfect beatitude is not natural, but its final end, will show that such is not the case.

And, hence, we submit that the interpretation suggested by Cajetan must be rejected.

(1.) THE PRINCIPLE OF PERFECTION.

Being as being is either itself, fully and completely, perfectly identical with itself under every aspect, or it is not. There is a real distinction of essence and existence, or there is an absolute identity. There is no intervening compromise where it is question of the two ultimates, being and essence. Identical with itself, being is absolute and unique. And, accordingly, such a being is perfect, unto itself its own beatitude: "*Soli Deo beatitudo perfecta est naturalis; quia idem est ei esse, et beatum esse.*" For God, to be is to be infinite in every way, unique, unto Himself His own beatitude.¹

In the finite there is no longer this identity of being and essence. And, hence, it is not unto itself its own beatitude. It is imperfect, it is lacking, it is not unto itself the reason of its own being, it is not unto itself its own end, its beatitude comes necessarily from without. But the participation that it enjoys in being, imperfect as it is, bears within it a hope of greater being. It has captured, as it were, an aspiration for perfection. It ever tends to greater being. This tendency is so intimately part of its being that it cannot relinquish it. A being, not fully itself, that would not tend to augment

1.—C.G., lib. I, cap. CI.

itself, that would not tend towards perfection, would be in fatal contradiction with itself. For as being it would be the merest tendency to non-being. Hence for the finite to be is to progress.

But it is necessary to situate this tendency in its metaphysical context. For metaphysics considers all under the aspect of being, and that we said was tantamount to considering the actual as possible. Hence when we say that for the finite to be, is to progress, this must be understood of progress as possible. Metaphysics prescind from the fact of progress; all it presumes to say is that the nature of the finite is such as to claim the necessary possibility of progress as long as it has not reached the final end, which would put it in presence of the ultimate perfection of which it is capable.

This metaphysical tendency of which we speak derives no doubt from the analogical concept of movement. In its lowest stages it is movement as applicable to qualitative change and the movements of corporeal things. As movement signifies the act of potency in so far as it is still potential for further perfection, it is this passage from potency to act which is the basis for our application of tendency to higher beings. But in its widest sense, that which precisely now concerns us, we may apply this concept to the finite as such, in its relation to God.

For, as we have seen, the finite as such is that which has not within it its *raison d'être*, it is not unto itself an end. To inquire into its nature is to be forced to look beyond it. Its metaphysical contingency prevents its ever being a final term for mind. Metaphysical reflection, which is ever seeking the fundamental aspect that attaches the relative to the absolute, discovers the deepest meaning of the finite to be just its total dependency on the first and final cause, and exemplar of all. And as the causality of the final cause is tendency, the finite is just that which in regard to God is *in potentia*; its metaphysical formula is becoming.¹ It was

1.—Oportet ut id quod est in potentia reducatur in actum per aliquod quod est in actu, et hoc est movere.—Ia-IIae., Q. IX, art. 1.

in this comprehensive way that St. Thomas viewed the relation of the finite to God.

God alone, he wrote, is immutable. Every creature is mutable in some way. There is either a potency for substantial existence, as in the case of corruptible substances, or at least for the finite as such there is potency from the point of view of the end.¹ The Saint could not have more clearly said that the metaphysical formula of the finite is becoming. The finite is that which tends; it is that which is not self-sufficient; it is that which does not arrest the movement of thought. It is not an end unto itself; its deepest meaning is its very tendency beyond itself. Hence, as long as the finite being is absent from its final end, it requires the possibility of progress. It is *in potentia*.

The nature of the finite being determines the mode of its tendency. Nature has within it prospectively the end towards which it moves. The law of its progress and development is written within it. The form in its initial imperfection is absent from itself, from its ideal perfection. But this ideal perfection is clearly indicated; it necessarily bears an intelligible relation to the being that tends. There is but the one possible relation between the nature and the perfection which it seeks.

It is just this absence of the form from itself that sets up the motion, and characterises its particular modality. For nature is the very source of tendency and appetitivity. And the nature tends towards its perfection. All being so tends.² The nature is, as it were, merely the hope of perfection, it is the form as yet incomplete which ever seeks itself.³ It follows that because any particular being is what it is in

1.—*Solus Deus est omino immutabilis; omnis autem creatura aliquo modo est mutabilis*. . . . Sic igitur in omni creatura est potentia ad mutationem vel secundum esse substantiale, sicut corpora corruptibilia . . . vel secundum ordinem ad finem et applicationem virtutis ad diversa sicut in angelis; et universaliter omnes creaturae communiter sunt mutabiles secundum potentiam creantis, in cujus potestate est esse et non-esse earum.—Ia., Q. IX, art. 2.

2.—Ia., Q. LXXVIII, art. 1, ad 3; *Ibid.*, Q. LXXVIII, art. 4; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1.

3.—Ia., Q. IX, art. 1; *Ibid.*, Q. LXXX, art. 1; Ia-IIae., Q. VIII, art. 2.

virtue of its form, which is but the as yet incomplete unrealised perfection, that there is but one really ultimate and final perfection possible, and, hence, only one unique final end.

Now there is in man, in common with all creation, this tendency towards his perfection, and as epitome of all the lower orders, there is also that growth in merely physical perfection. But in man, as man, in that which elevates him above all creation, there is a specific character, which must be taken into consideration. He is a knower; he is capable of possessing, not only his own form, but the forms of other beings as well. By knowledge he reflects all creation; he can concentrate within his mind its scattered perfections; he is endowed with mind. And hence, his tendency towards perfection exhibits its own specific character; mind has its characteristic desire; intelligence is wedded to will.¹ If we look beyond man, we shall see that, in pure intelligences, desire is also found; they are not unto themselves their own perfection; the disjunction of essence and existence forbids it; they are in potency in regard to God. Throughout all creation, the intellectual orders included, there is a tendency or "desire," for intelligent beings are also endowed with nature, and nature, no matter where it is found, has a priority of its own.²

Now being as being is illimited, and the finite's participation in being demands a tendency as illimitable as the nature of the finite being will permit. But when material being tends, it is to realise the formal integrity of its nature, and to dwarf the distance that lies between its present imperfection and that perfection of its nature in its ideal state. But beyond

1.—Sicut enim intellectus cognoscit principia naturaliter, sic voluntas vult finem naturaliter. Unde voluntas naturaliter tendit in suum finem ultimum.—Ia., Q. LX, art. 2; Cf. C.G., lib. III, cap. XVI.

2.—Necesse est in angelis ponere dilectionem naturalem, ad cujus evidentiam considerandum est, quod semper prius salvatur in posteriori. *Natura autem prior est quam intellectus; quia natura cujuscumque rei est essentia ejus. Unde id quod est naturae, oportet salvari etiam in habentibus intellectum. Est autem hoc commune omni naturae ut habeat aliquam inclinationem, quae est appetitus naturalis vel amor; quae tamen inclinatio diversimode invenitur in diversis naturis, in unaquaque secundum modum ejus. Unde in natura intellectuali invenitur inclinatio naturalis, secundum voluntatem.*—Ia., Q. LX, art. 1 Cf. *Ibid.*, art. 2.

that it cannot go. And it is just the very harmony of things that this tendency of inferior creation points beyond itself. When material being has striven to realise its perfection ; when even the individual has succumbed in the interests of the species, the tendency to God is taken up by mind. It is just the paradox of the finite's struggle for perfection that sacrifice and self-denial is a metaphysical necessity. Within the mind of man, the tendency of the lower orders finds a new, a more elevated form of life.

But if this is possible, it is because there is in mind a new-found elasticity. Mind is not riveted to matter, it is not limited to the possession merely of its own form ; it may, while remaining itself, become other things : *aliud in quantum aliud*. And hence, we are prepared to see that the dynamism of the intellectual being towards perfection will be of another order, the higher order of intentional perfection.

This is possible because, though soul is the form of the body, yet intelligence is such that it outsteps its "tenement of clay" ; it is immaterial. It is this immateriality that allows mind to play its rôle of actively elevating to its own life the *élan* of all creation, of portraying within it the order of all being, of carrying on the dynamic impulse of creation to God, but above all it allows that infinite tendency which is at the heart of the finite to find expression. In the intellectual nature, therefore, there is an enormous extension ; the illimitable tendency which the finite gains from its participation in being becomes possible.

In this sense in intellectual creation there is in regard to God, as St. Thomas puts it, a certain *immediateness*. The intellectual nature as such has a transcendental relation to all being. In possession of intelligence the human mind enjoys a certain infinity. For though as a subject it is finite, yet by the range of objects that it may traverse it is infinite. And this infinity of the human mind St. Thomas constantly affirmed.¹ The rational nature as such is infinite in act or in

1.—Intellectus noster ad infinitum in intelligendo extenditur, cujus signum est quod quolibet quantitate finita data intellectus noster majorem excogitare possit. Frustra autem esset haec ordinatio intellectus in infinitum nisi esset

potency, according to its relation to intelligible objects. We have but to regard this relation of intelligence to being to realise whether it is in potency or in act.¹ Human intelligence, which initially is in potency for intelligible objects, possesses a potential infinity since intelligibility is as wide as being, which is illimited.² Hence intelligence as the union of form with being, whose adequate object is the potential infinite of being, is capable of indefinite progress within its own order.

It follows necessarily that the finite intellectual being is dynamised by a tendency towards perfection, which is incessant. And this being so, the finite has not of itself any right to perfect beatitude, to that beatitude that would give it all possible perfection. It is open on the infinite; not only that, but it is obliged to remain so. God alone, therefore, has a right to perfect beatitude, or to put it better, He is beatitude, for we cannot speak of the "rights" of God, if it be not the rights that are His by His absolute identity with being.

There is thus a two-fold view-point, that of God, Who is His own end, and that of the finite, and these we may say on last analysis are but one. For God is centre of all, and that is to say that the finite's centre of gravity, as it were, is outside itself. God alone is to Himself an end, and for all else, He is necessarily the anonymous object of all desire.³ He is pure act, and outside of Him, in His regard, the finite

aliqui res intelligibilis infinita; oportet igitur esse aliquam rem intelligibilem infinitam, quam oportet esse maxime rerum, et hanc dicimus Deum.—C.G., lib. I, cap. XLIII; Cf. C.G., lib. II, cap. LXXXIII; *Ibid.*, lib. II, cap. XCVIII. Secunda autem actio de sui ratione habet infinitatem vel simpliciter, vel secundum quid. Simpliciter quidem sicut intelligere cujus objectum est verum; et velle cujus objectum est bonum; quorum utrumque convertitur cum ente.—Ia., Q. LIV, art. 2. Cf. Ia., Q. LXXVI, art. 2, ad 4; *Ibid.*, Q. LXXIX, art. 2.

1.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIV.

2.—Cum potentia proportionetur suo objecto, oportet hoc modo se habere intellectum ad infinitum, sicut se habet ad ejus objectum, quod est quidditas rei materialis. In rebus autem materialibus non invenitur infinitum in actu, sed solum in potentia. . . . Et ideo in intellectu nostro invenitur infinitum in potentia. . . . quia nunquam intellectus noster tot intelliget, quin possit plura intelligere.—Ia., Q. LXXVI, art. 2.

3.—*In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. I, art. 3, ad 4.

is that which is in potency.¹ Not unto itself its own end, it must desire that God be God, and must await on His pleasure for that perfection which it is incapable of acquiring for itself.

The presence of God to Himself in the full perfection of complete identity with being presides over the metaphysical return of all being to its source. By the very fact of its creation, the finite is a tendency towards God. And if in the darkness of lower creation, this impulse turns it towards the light and intelligibility of mind, in man this impulse rises up and reaches consciousness. Volition becomes characteristic of man, with a tendency towards the good. As nature it will seek necessarily the good, but no longer is it limited to any particular good. The good it seeks is that which intelligence represents, and as intelligence in its adequate object faces towards the wide expanse of being, so will, deriving from intelligence, must find in being an aspect which holds attraction for it.

In material being there was merely intelligible tendency. A little above it, in the hierarchy of perfection, a certain immanence appears. The plant is capable of a certain movement of itself; a certain immanent action marks its advance in the scale of being. With the animal there is already a certain knowledge of the end, but the sensible representation is the fatal principle of action. St. Thomas allows the animal a certain judgement, but such a judgement is not autonomous.² They follow the judgement, and the nature has just that specific perfection which characterises the animal's imperfection. It is limited to the particular.

In man intelligence rises up and naturally open to all being, the appetite which accompanies it is no longer limited to the particular object. As desire is but the urge towards the good, in man there is a desire which tends towards being as good, towards the illimited. Intelligence revealing nature's fundamental orientation towards being, the illimited horizon of the good stretches out before the will.

1.—*De Spirit. Creaturis*, Q. I, art. 1.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXIV, art. 1, ad 2.

Thus from the view-point of intelligence and of will, man is ordained to the potential infinite object, being. The rational nature as such is dynamised by a tendency which is infinite. The intellectual nature as such tends infinitely. No doubt to tend infinitely is not immediately the same as to tend towards the Infinite. Nor was St. Thomas guilty of such a verbal confusion. Yet, when he comes to consider the intelligibility of such an infinite tendency, he concludes that so to tend is really to tend towards the Infinite. His reason for so concluding is in virtue of the principle that the passage across an infinite series is metaphysically impossible.¹ There must be a final end if this indetermination which an infinite tendency would imply is to be removed, and if progress is to be at all possible.² For that precisely is the meaning of the principle. "In those things," he writes, "which are subordinated one to the other, if the principal one is removed then those that are subordinate to it cease also to be." And in this way Aristotle proved that in moving causes it was impossible to proceed *ad infinitum*. When it is question of ends, however, what is first in intention is that which, as it were, impels desire : remove this and there will be no movement whatever. "Now the ultimate end," he says, "is that beyond which the agent does not desire anything, and in all action it is essential to indicate something beyond which the agent does not seek, for otherwise actions would tend infinitely, and that is not possible," he repeats, "for since the infinite is not to be traversed the agent could not even commence to act".³

We have, therefore, two very definite acquisitions. On the one hand, the finite of itself cannot set a limit to its aspiration, and on the other, because the rational nature as such implies an infinite tendency there must be a final end, that its very progress may be possible. This final end must

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. 1, art. 4.

2.—Quod est tantum propter aliud diligibile, est propter illud quod est tantum propter se diligibile; non enim est abire in infinitum in appetitu naturae, quia desiderium naturae frustraretur, quum non sit possibile pertransire infinita.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

3.—C.G., lib. III, cap. II.

be God, and hence there is necessarily a tendency towards Him. Now there are many who accept the thesis that God is the final end, who admit that God alone is capable of moving the human will, but refuse to admit that ultimately we are forced to hold that there is in intellectual being a tendency towards Him in His objective reality. For St. Thomas, on the contrary, the similarity of his proofs for these different positions is remarkable. Intellect and will are set in motion sufficiently by God alone. And why? Precisely because of the infinite capacity of both.¹ Even where the species that God imprints on the created intellect are not sufficient to know God as He is in Himself, yet, says St. Thomas, "God moves the created intellect, though not intelligible for it." He could not have more succinctly expressed the truth that we are tending on last analysis towards God Himself.²

The imperfect good that will finds before it, is not sufficient to move it. Hence, when it is attracted by the good it is because God is the good as such, goodness itself, that alone which is capable of satisfying it fully, is capable of moving it. It seeks the participated good because it seeks God. As long as the creature is absent from God the finite necessarily retains its tendency towards Him. Whatever perfection it is capable of acquiring naturally, its fundamental tendency goes beyond it. Such a perfection being but a participation is possible only because of the more ultimate tendency of its being, and hence it is essentially relative. It marks the boundary reached by its natural activity, but it is incapable of giving that fixed point which alone renders intelligible the infinite tendency of nature. If

1.—Non enim sufficienter aliquid potest movere aliquod mobile, nisi virtus activa moventis excedat, vel saltem adaequet virtutem passivam mobilis. Virtus autem passiva voluntatis se extendit ad bonum in universali, est enim ejus objectum, bonum universale, sicut et intellectus objectum est ens universale . . . Solus autem Deus est bonum universale. Unde ille solus implet voluntatem et sufficienter eam movet ut objectum . . . Inclinare in bonum universale est primi moventis cui proportionatur ultimus finis.—Ia., Q. CV, art. 4. Mens creata reputatur informis, nisi ipsi primae veritati inhaereat.—Ia., Q. CVI, art. 1, ad 3.

2.—Similitudines quas Deus imprimit intellectui creato, non sufficiunt ad ipsum Deum intelligendum per essentiam. Unde movet intellectum creatum; cum tamen non sit ei intelligibilis.—Ia., Q. CV, art. 3, ad 3.

we need confirmation of this fundamental doctrine of Aquinas, we have but to examine his view of what a natural beatitude would imply.

(2.) NATURAL BEATITUDE.

Few will not have noticed that while St. Thomas candidly admits that all being as such is one,¹ he never does so for truth and goodness.² There is only one being of whom we can affirm truth and goodness essentially : God. This serves to indicate that in the Saint's mind there is a consistent doctrine which forbids him to say that the finite is either true or good essentially, while he willingly admits its essential unity. If the rigour of his metaphysic so extends to detail, it is but lawful to infer that it is rigidly consistent in its broader outlines.

Though being and goodness are really identical, they are not so under every aspect. Being signifies something primarily in act, and asserts itself as something opposed to potentiality. Simply speaking substantial existence assures being. Goodness, on the other hand, suggests the idea of perfection, a certain perfectibility, and thereby hurries on to a goodness really deserving of the name, that which is really good in act.³ Perfectibility is simply the promise of final goodness, and that is good, in the strict sense, which has attained its ultimate perfection. Goodness implies finality, and finality for its complete intelligibility implies a final cause that is its own explanation.⁴

In this emphasis of detail St. Thomas makes a point. It serves on the one hand to concentrate in God all there is of truth and goodness, and on the other to link up with God all there is outside of Him.⁵ Everything that participates in being has a certain elementary perfection which is in view of something final. Only when this ultimate perfection is

1.—Ia., Q. VI, art. 3, ad 1 ; *Ibid.*, Q. XI, art. 4, ad 3 ; *Ibid.*, Q. LXXVI, art. 7 ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXI, art. 5, ad 8 ; *De Pot.*, Q. IX, art. 7.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXI, art. 5.

3.—Ia., Q. V, art. 1, ad 1.

4.—Cf. Ia., Q. XVI, art. 4 ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXI, art. 3.

5.—Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXI, art. 5.

attained, may it be said to be good and perfect.¹ The first perfection is in view of the ultimate perfection of which it is capable. Nature is the merest starting point, it tends towards what is above and beyond it.

No matter what may be the perfection attainable by natural activity, there can be nothing about it that implies a self-sufficient finality. It is essentially subordinate to the final end that lies without it. The identity of essence with being is absent, and hence it is not sufficient to itself; it is penetrated through and through by a tendency beyond itself. For the finite its natural perfection consists in recognising that it is not an end to itself, and that it covers a tendency that is infinite and incessant. For before a nature attains the term of that development of which it is capable it is impossible that its tendency should find repose.²

It follows that as finite perfect beatitude is not ours by right of nature. Whatever natural beatitude implies, it must necessarily cover a tendency beyond itself to God. Now as such, natural beatitude is incapable of revealing the full capacities of the nature which is tending. It is essentially subordinate and relative to a further end. And though it marks the limit of the creature's activity, it does not mark the further limit of the creature's finality. It is no doubt the end realisable by the creature's activity, but it is not the really final end which alone can fully render intelligible the nature whence this activity springs.

To dream of arresting this tendency of the finite being naturally turned towards the infinite, or to seek of itself a resting place in the possible progress of being, would entail either of two alternatives: either a complete denial of itself as being, or a pretention, equally fatal, to the divine prerogative. For all being desires to remain itself. But there is really a third alternative, and it throws an interesting light on his view, where the question arises of a natural perfection

1.—Ia., Q. V, art. 1, ad 1; *Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIX; Ia., Q. LXXIII, art. 1.

2.—Ultimus finis hominis terminat ejus appetitum naturalem, ita quod, eo habito, nihil aliud quaeritur . . . Quamdiu aliquid movetur ad perfectionem, nondum est in ultimo fine.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XLVIII.

that would be final or saturating. It arises out of his examination of the sin of the fallen angels.

To appreciate this alternative we have to recall St. Thomas' distinction between the will as nature and the will as free. As nature will is determined to the good in general. It wills the final end necessarily, and because it wills the final end it can will the means. But the means, because particular, have not the compelling force of the good as such. The will is free, and here he speaks of the will as elective.

It is characteristic of the finite that, absent from the final end, its will may fail to order itself to this end. Such a defect is impossible in Him who is goodness itself and whose very nature is itself its own end. It is precisely because the final end is extrinsic to the finite, something that is not part of its nature, that there may be in its regard a voluntary turning away, where the finite seeks its final satisfaction in its own connatural good.¹ To seek within itself its final end is for the finite to claim that perfect beatitude belongs to it by right of nature ; it is to cease voluntarily to ordain its elective choice according to the deeper tendency of its nature which carries it beyond itself in search of its perfection. Again, it is just because this final perfection is not within it, not identical with its nature, not its by right of nature, that such a defect of choice is possible.²

And, thus, we begin to realise the ultimate significance of that phrase of Aquinas where he says "that outside of God beatitude is not natural, but the final end." And this final

1.—*Quaelibet autem voluntas naturaliter vult illud quod est proprium volentis bonum, scilicet ipsum esse perfectum, et non potest contrarium hujus velle. In illo igitur volente nullum potest esse peccatum voluntatis accidere cujus bonum est ultimus finis ; quod non continetur sub alterius finis ordine, sed sub ejus ordine omnes alii fines continentur. Hujusmodi autem volens est Deus, cujus esse est summa bonitas, quae est ultimus finis Licet enim naturalis inclinatio voluntatis insit unicuique volenti ad volendum et amandum sui ipsius perfectionem, ita quod contrarium hujus velle non possit, non tamen sic est ei inditum naturaliter ut ita ordinet suam perfectionem in alium finem quod ab eo deficere non possit, *quum finis superior non sit suae naturae proprius, sed superioris naturae.* Relinquitur igitur suo arbitrio quod propriam perfectionem in superiorem ordinet finem.—C.G., lib. III, cap. CIX.*

2.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CXIII.

end is necessarily outside the finite.¹ It is that towards which spontaneously it tends. In every sense, God is His own end, His own perfection, His own goodness. But the finite, no matter what its rank be in the scale of perfection, is no longer essentially good; its goodness is derived, its perfection must come from above it. And as all being tends towards its perfection the finite tends beyond itself to God. To deny this tendency would be to deny itself, to reduce itself to contradiction, and because being as such is not thus naturally opposed to itself, such a metaphysical denial cannot come from will as the expression of the natural tendency of the finite to its perfection. Even in the case of simple beings, intellectual substances which are, according to St. Thomas, in presence of their natural perfection by an intuitive glance, there is that tendency, that metaphysical tendency of their nature towards God. They are not self-explicative; their natural perfection is subordinated to the really final end; they tend to God.²

But what is possible is the free ordering of their natural perfection to the really final end. In regard to the final end which is outside them they are free to realise the subordinate character of their own natural perfection as a "final" end essentially relative, to the truly final end which is God, or to commit the sin against God, and their own selves, of inhering to their natural perfection, which is merely a relative end, as the final term of their "desire." So doing, they sin against God, which is the unique final end of all; they sin against the natural tendency of their nature which takes them beyond themselves in search of perfection. That was, according to St. Thomas, the sin of Satan.

Asking if the fallen angels had desired to be as God, St. Thomas distinguishes in his reply. "To wish to be as God,"

1.—*Ultimus finis dicitur dupliciter: uno modo simpliciter, et alio modo quoad aliquem. Cum enim finis dicatur quandoque quidem res, quandoque autem adeptio rei vel possessio ejus, sicut avaro finis est vel pecunia vel possessio pecunie; manifestum est quod, simpliciter loquendo, ultimus finis est ipsa res.*—Ia-IIae., Q. XVI, art. 3; Cf. *Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIX.

2.—*Licet in Angelo non sit composito formae et materiae, est tamen in eo actus et potentia.*—Ia., Q. L, art. 2, ad 3; *Ibid.*, Q. LIV, art. 3; C.G., lib. II, cap. LII, LIII. *Materia et forma dividunt substantiam materialem, potentia autem et actus dividunt ens commune.* C.G., cap. II, LIV.

he says, "may assume two forms, according as there is a desire to be equal to God, or merely like unto Him." "Clearly," he says, "the first is absolutely excluded for any being capable of reflection. For such a being must recognise the borrowed existence that is his.¹ The devil was not guilty of such a metaphysical absurdity." "But the wish to be like unto God," he says, "may also assume two forms." "One might wish," he says, "to be like unto God in that of which one is naturally capable, having due respect to the proper mode of acquiring this similitude, or, on the other hand, this same likeness may be desired, but in a disordered manner." For example it would be a disorder to desire as ultimate the natural perfection that the creature is capable of acquiring naturally, while turning away his attention from the supernatural end which can be acquired by grace alone, as also would the desire of ultimate beatitude be a disorder if the creature decided to attain to it by its own unaided forces. But the really important point appears when St. Thomas goes on to say "that the two alternatives come to one and the same thing: that of desiring ultimate beatitude by natural means, that which is proper to God alone."² Hence, in a word, that final beatitude, which is the sole prerogative of God by nature, is denied to the creature as long as it remains within the sphere of natural activity. A natural end that would be final, in the strict sense of the word, is

1.—*De Malo*, Q. XVI, art. 3.

2.—Angelus absque omni dubio peccavit appetendo esse ut Deus. Sed hoc potest intelligi dupliciter: uno modo, per aequiparantiam; alio modo, per similitudinem. Primo quidem modo non potuit appetere esse ut Deus; quia scivit hoc esse impossibile, naturali cognitione; . . . Appetere autem esse ut Deus per similitudinem, contingit dupliciter. Uno modo quantum ad id in quo aliquid natum est Deo assimilari; et sic, si aliquis quantum ad hoc appetat esse Deo similis non peccat: dummodo similitudinem Dei debito ordine appetat adipisci, ut scilicet eam a Deo habeat. . . . Alio vero modo potest aliquis appetere similis esse Deo, quantum ad hoc in quo non natus est assimilari. . . . Sed in hoc appetiit indebite esse similis Deo, quia appetiit ut finem ultimum beatitudinis id ad quod virtute suae naturae poterat pervenire, avertens suum appetitum a beatitudine supernaturali, quae est ex gratia Dei. Vel si appetiit ut ultimum finem illam Dei similitudinem quae datur ex gratia, voluit hoc habere per virtutem suae naturae, non ex divino auxilio secundum Deo dispositionem. Et hoc consonat dictis Anselmi qui dicit quod appetiit illud ad quod pervenisset si stetisset. Et haec duo quodammodo in idem redeunt; quia secundum utrumque appetiit finalem beatitudinem per suam virtutem habere, quod est proprium Dei.—*Ia.*, Q. LXIII, art. 3.

impossible. Such a beatitude is relative ; it points beyond itself to the really final end.

Natural beatitude, therefore, as possible covers necessarily a tendency to God, the truly final end. It is willed and desired precisely in virtue of this tendency to God, and as an imperfect participation in a really ultimate beatitude. It implies essentially the attraction of the really final end which is outside and beyond it.

In view of this, we are in a position to appreciate at its true value the fundamental argument that appears so often in the pages of the Saint's works, " that for ultimate beatitude the finite must attain the First Principle in an immediate possession." For as we have seen, even natural beatitude supposes the tendency of the creature beyond itself, and tendency as such is essentially directed to things as they are *in se*. And if it be objected that this tendency can only envisage God as the principle of natural perfection, the obvious reply is that so far as the creature's natural activity is concerned, though it may supply the formality under which God is attained (*sub quo*), yet because of the tendency that it supposes, the ultimate object (*quod*) is God Himself.¹ The ultimate term of appetitive tendency, that which properly contains the perfection which this tendency seeks, must be God Himself. And hence, to say that God is merely desired as the principle of natural perfection does not exclude the fact that, whereas the precise formality under which God is actually attained may be this natural perfection derivable from the possession of God in His finite manifestations, the final end of this tendency is the divine essence itself.

This is what is implicit in St. Thomas' argument that being is ultimately perfect in so far as it attains to its principle,²

1.—Res quae est extra animam movet intellectum, et res intellecta movet appetitum, et appetitus tunc ducit ad hoc quod perveniat ad rem a qua motus incepit.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 2. It requires but little reflection to see how this applies to the tendency of the creature as such which is dependent on God in its origin, its progress and its end.

2.—Maxime perfectum est quando pertingit ad propriam activum quod est ei causa perfectionis.—*De Anima.*, Q. I, art. 5. In ipso enim est ultima perfectio rationalis creaturae quod est ei principium essendi : in tantum enim unumquodque perfectum est in quantum ad suum principium attingit.—*Ia.*, Q. XII, art. 1.

for in the metaphysical way in which he envisaged finality, the perfection of any faculty must derive from the object,¹ the final object towards which it tends. The perfection of the intellectual nature as such is without it ; it is situated in the ultimate end towards which it tends. " Then only," he says, " is that which is passive fully perfect when it attains to its active principle, which is for it the cause of its perfection." ² St. Thomas viewed all created being in regard to God as potency. But the perfection of potency is act, and St. Thomas saw in God, at least terminatively, the perfection of all being.

The ultimate perfection of the finite is to be found in God, and in Him alone. It is towards Him that the creature ultimately tends. To those who object that the divine essence, because transcendent, is not desired by the finite, St. Thomas would reply " that it is in the divine essence alone is found the perfection of the finite " ; to deny that as such it is ultimately desired would be tantamount to denying the possibility of final beatitude for the finite, or admitting that final beatitude could be found outside God. Natural perfection, accordingly, is something essentially relative. Granted that it is the limit attainable by natural forces, its very relativity prevents it from fully specifying the nature which is at the source of this activity. Nor is natural perfection itself intelligible as activity, unless we recognise the further attraction of the end which is situated beyond the creature. In no sense, therefore, is natural beatitude willed for itself. If it could be willed for itself it would be tantamount to making the final end something which would be part of the finite itself, and ultimately that the finite sought final beatitude as something natural. Thus, we eventually come back to the Thomistic thesis that the final end alone is willed for itself, and that this final end, beyond the finite, alone renders full account of whatever participated perfection the creature may realise by its own

1.—Unius cujusque potentiae perfectio attenditur secundum rationem sui objecti.—Ia-IIae, Q. III, art. 8.

2.—*De Anima*, Q. unica, art. 5.

activity outside of the immediate possession of God.¹ Hence, for the creature beatitude is not natural, but its final end. And as the final end is that alone which is willed for itself, the full perfection which it is capable of imparting, alone renders intelligible the tendencies of the rational creature.²

We submit, therefore, that a natural beatitude which could be regarded as a final end belongs to God alone. It is excluded for the creature. It is important to note that what we exclude is a natural beatitude which would be a final end.³ For we have admitted natural beatitude as the limit of the creature's natural activity. But what we emphasise is that as such it is relative; it points beyond itself. For St. Thomas beatitude which would be final, must bring with it the appeasing of the creature's "natural desire." And natural desire for him is the inherent tendency of the creature towards its ultimate perfection. It follows that natural perfection is not the term of the creature's natural desire, though it may prove to be the only possible term of its natural activity, seeing that the elevation to Himself depends on God Himself. Natural perfection is merely a participation in that ultimate perfection which is desired for itself. As the limit attainable by the creature's own forces, it is relative, not only to the final end, but it is relative to the nature which it characterises and of which it is only a partial realisation; it does not exhaust the "capacities" of that nature whose natural object is the potential infinite. Natural beatitude is only possible because nature tends beyond it, in its desire of ultimate perfection, in its desire of God. It is thus that, according to the suggestive phrase of the psalmist—

1.—Cf. C.G., lib. II, cap. XVI; lib. III, cap. XXV; lib. III, cap. XXVI.

2.—*Felicitas enim humana non est ad ulteriorem finem ordinabilis, si sit ultima.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXIV. *Quod ordinatur ad alterum sicut ad finem non est ultima hominis felicitas.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXV.

3.—The expression "natural final end" is really ambiguous. It might mean the final end *naturally* possible, or the final end simply speaking, possible in every hypothesis. In the first instance the creature tends to the greatest possible assimilation with God (C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXV). To be united, however, to God in a more intimate manner than that of natural knowledge will depend ultimately on God Himself. If natural beatitude marks the limit attainable by the creature's natural forces, the tendency of the rational nature will be found responsive to the advances of God: there will be natural desire of His vision.

abyssus ad abyssum invocat—the rational nature calls to God across the veils of its natural activity for complete intelligibility. For nature is one,¹ and the really final end is unique. But the really final end is outside and beyond the creature ; its possession is natural to God alone. Naturally, therefore, the creature cannot claim its possession, but what the finite does claim for its intelligibility is the tendency to God as the final end ; to deny this tendency would be a metaphysical contradiction in the finite, and it was only possible, we have seen, to will, not considered as expressing the tendency of nature, but will as free and elective, and this in its turn was possible because the final end was beyond the finite, and did not expose itself in all the attractiveness which in itself it possesses. Were natural beatitude accepted as a final end, as the complete saturation of the tendencies of the rational nature, as something desired in and for itself, it would be a denial of nature itself. Natural tendency is incapable of such. It was only because freedom remained in regard to the supernatural that the angels fell. Just as natural beatitude is possible in virtue of a tacit acceptance of the really final end, so even though the demon sinned against the truly final end, it was in virtue of his very tendency to God as author of his nature. It is just the unhappy privilege of the finite rational being that while really wishing its ultimate perfection he may give the lie, by an elective choice, to what is best in him, the tendency beyond himself, to the perfect. And in the demon this very tendency to God remains, and he is torn by the fundamental opposition of his natural tendency and his free choice.

In view of these metaphysical exigencies of natural perfection, it is not difficult to surmise St. Thomas' reply to an objection which has been made against this concept of natural beatitude. It has been said that such a natural beatitude would imply a grave disorder, if we suppose man to be energised by a tendency towards the vision of God, and yet destined never to reach it. Would not this concept

1.—Manifestum est autem quod unius rei non est nisi una forma.—Ia., Q. XLI, art. 2.

of natural beatitude be an unhappy rehearsal of the fable of Tantalus ?¹

There are many replies possible to such an objection. But the evident reply is that for man perfect beatitude is not natural. Even natural beatitude would necessarily imply a certain contemplation. St. Thomas was scarcely of opinion that "the quest for knowledge, not its possession, was the entertainment of the human mind"; nor did he accept the dream of a Leibnitz "that an infinite progress would be the natural end of man." But what he did hold was "that although contemplation was the end even of a natural perfection, such a contemplation supposed a metaphysical tendency to God, and was, as it were, the creature's very highest expression naturally of its desire of God." It is necessary, however, constantly to bear in mind what this metaphysical tendency of "desire" signifies. As we have more than once pointed out, it has to do simply with the relation of nature to its end. Now it is just this transcendental relation of of the intellectual nature to its perfection, to its final end, that St. Thomas has in mind when he speaks of metaphysical tendency or "desire." For him it is just the unique dignity of the rational nature, as opposed to the lower orders, that, in the order of finality, it enjoys a relation to an end beyond its natural powers. The really final end, as St. Thomas insists, is not something that belongs to nature: *non est naturae sed naturae finis*. As long as the rational creature is absent from God, this relation of its nature, this ultimate orientation of its being, remains. We have seen that natural beatitude is essentially subordinate to the really final end, and granted that in the order of realisation, it merely implies the acquisition of God in His finite manifestations, yet that does not exclude the fundamental relation of the rational nature to its ultimate end. As the causality of finality is tendency, we may still speak of the tendency of such a nature to its ultimate end, provided we do not wrest such a tendency from its metaphysical context. Essentially the relation of a nature to an end which it cannot acquire in the natural

1.—Cf. *Civiltà Cattolica*, May (1897), pp. 322-326.

order, such a tendency can only imply on the part of the rational nature a "capacity" for the further end, and on the part of this end that desirability which, as the ultimate perfection of said nature, it inherently possesses.

The so-called tantalising character of natural beatitude is thus positively excluded. When St. Thomas spoke of a natural desire or tendency he was speaking directly of the intellectual nature as such. He had not in mind an actual desire. His interests were not psychological but metaphysical, and for him "desire" signified simply a transcendental relation to its final end. Natural beatitude as the end obtainable by the creature's activity pointed beyond itself to the really final end which lay without it. Even in the order of activity there could not be question of this tantalising character of natural beatitude, as may be seen from the Saint's treatment of that beatitude which is the lot of those children who die without baptism. The creature in such a state would not be wise enough to know of God's ultimate intentions, and would be too wise to be dissatisfied with the natural beatitude which was its inheritance. If philosophy itself as the contemplation of wisdom had such *delectationes admirabiles* for Aquinas, what higher delights would he not find even in that participated beatitude which would be the creature's in its natural end.¹

(3.) THE ANTINOMY REMOVED.

If we now take a retrospective glance at the apparently antithetical form which the harmony of nature and supernatural took beneath the pen of Aquinas, we shall no longer be surprised at it, but shall marvel rather at the happy way in which the antinomies of his texts express a real antinomy

1.—Habet enim philosophia in sapientiae contemplatione delectationes admirabiles, et quantum ad puritatem et quantum ad firmitatem. Puritas quidem talium delectationum attenditur ex hoc, quod sunt circa res immateriales. Firmitas autem earum attenditur secundum hoc quod sunt circa res immutabiles . . . Speculatio autem veritatis est duplex: una quidem quae consistit in contemplatione veritatis jam inventae et cognitae. Et hoc perfectus est cum sit terminus et finis inquisitionis. Unde et major est delectatio in consideratione veritatis jam cognitae quam in inquisitione ejus.—*Ethic.*, lib. X, lect. 10.

of the rational nature. Antinomies are harmful only in so far as their intelligible unity is obscured from view, but in the mind of Aquinas this intelligible unity was ever present, and it is lost to view only by those who have not fully entered into the spirit of his metaphysical synthesis of being. The apparent oppositions fall gradually away, and we realise the poise of his mind by the very balanced way in which he expressed the transcendence of the supernatural, and its fundamental harmony with nature.

St. Thomas, we have seen, was ever saying, in the same breath, as it were, that the vision of God is beyond the powers of man, nay of every created intelligence, and yet that it is naturally desired by the rational creature.

Now the real antinomy that corresponds to these apparent ones is to be found in the fact that man, though limited in his natural forces, enjoys in virtue of his intellectual nature a "capacity" for a perfection which transcends him. It is just the paradox of the finite rational creature that its own activity is incapable once for all of immobilising it in a self-sufficient saturating beatitude. Its natural beatitude is the limit attainable by the creature's own activity, but it is not the limit of the creature's "tendency" and "desire."

And this is the root of the whole difficulty of interpreting the thought of St. Thomas. When St. Thomas distinguishes a two-fold end of man, as we have seen him do, his interpreters are not clear on this, that this division in the mind of the Saint is really a co-division. Whatever the logician will have to say to this, the fact remains that its basis—*fundamentum divisionis*—is not the same for both beatitudes. The natural end marks the term of nature's activity left to itself, but this very activity looks beyond itself to the only end, the final end, capable of saturating the intellectual nature whence it proceeds. And hence, when he speaks of natural end he has in view the *activity* of this nature, and when he speaks of the true final end, he has in mind the intellectual nature as such, source of this activity which is really only a partial expression of its own inherent tendency towards an asymptotic term. A natural end could not

possibly reduce fully to act, in the sense of exhausting all its capacities, a nature whose fundamental orientation is towards the infinite of being. There is thus very properly an opposition between the infinity of its "aspiration" and the finitude of its realisation. But the very finitude of its natural realisation reveals the infinity of its "desire," and shows that it tends to an end outside and beyond it, an end which, though beyond its natural powers, renders possible the very participation in beatitude which the natural end supposes.

This, therefore, is the only possible sense in which we can speak of two ends for man: one as the natural frontier of its realisation by its own unaided activity; the other as the asymptotic limit towards which his nature tends. Such a natural end is not really an end in the strict metaphysical sense as something willed for itself; it points beyond itself; it does not mark the final point which gives complete repose to tendency; rather it is possible in virtue of the very tendency which it covers. If we remember this we shall have no difficulty in reconciling the antithetical pronouncements of St. Thomas. The two-fold division of man's end is based on a two-fold basis, that of nature as principle of activity, on the one hand, and that of nature as principle of perfection on the other.¹

Not only is the division, therefore, not an exclusive one, but it is really a subordinate one. For there is but one end which is final, one beatitude which is perfect, and the other is relative and a participation. Only the unique final end can render fully intelligible the rational nature. There is but one end which could fully appease the movement of its desire. And hence, that there should be two absolute ends is unthinkable. The intellectual nature is one. Absent from its absolute perfection it seeks it. It is as unthinkable

1.—It is scarcely necessary to recall that when we speak of natural beatitude as the limit attainable by the creature's activity we are merely translating the words of St. Thomas himself. Where he gives the distinction of the two-fold end, he designates the natural end as *quem res creata potest attingere secundum virtutem suae naturae*.—Ia., Q. XXIII, art. 1; Cf. Ia., Q. CVIII, art. 4; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1; *De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 2, ad 3. See Appendix A.

that it should have two really final ends, as that it should not be itself.

This distinction, therefore, of a two-fold end is not to be regarded as a rigidly exclusive one. If the natural end is such that it can be attained by natural activity, it is not to be made retrospective, as giving the final specification of the nature as such. To do so would be to employ the Thomistic distinction of two ends against itself. It is one thing to be limited in power of achievement, but it is another to be unlimited in power of "aspiration." At the source of its activities lies the rational nature, greater than them, because source of incessant tendency. But this incessant tendency, we have seen, requires for its intelligibility a final end that would be saturating. And, hence, to designate as final end the natural end attainable by natural activity, is to render unintelligible the source whence such activity springs. The natural end, therefore, is determined by nature as principle of activity, but the final end is required for the intelligibility of nature as well as of its activity. The adequate meaning, therefore, of that antinomy which man exhibits at the heart of his being is expressed when we say that man is in search of an end beyond his powers, but within his transcendental capacities¹.

1.—See Appendix A.

CHAPTER III.

INTELLECTUAL NATURE : ITS ACTIVITY—GOD.

THE distinction which St. Thomas places between the two-fold end of man, instead of confusing issues, really serves to distinguish, as well as to harmonise, the two orders of nature and the supernatural. The natural end as the limit attainable by the creature's natural forces clearly indicates that the finite, so far as actual realisation of its perfection goes, formally attains God in His finite manifestations ; and hence, marks a return to God as author of its natural perfection.

To make God the direct object of the creature's activity as such would be to confuse irremediably the two orders. For the supernatural virtues of faith and charity, God, according to St. Thomas, is the direct object,¹ but in the philosophic order, the natural faculties will and intellect have for direct object truth and goodness in the abstract, *in communi*.²

Having looked more closely, however, into this vague unity of the naturally adequate object of the human mind, we found that it implied on the part of the nature, whence proceed the faculties of intelligence and will, a tendency which was infinite. The activity of these faculties required a certain fixed point or final end if the intelligibility of their source were to be finally assured ; it pointed beyond itself to God. If we may so express it, this activity is at once prospective and retrospective. It looks backwards to the rational nature, which though finite as a subject, yet enjoys a quasi-infinity of object ; it looks forward to God, the term of its final perfection.

1.—IIa-IIæ., Q. I, art. 1 ; *Ibid.*, Q. XXIII, art. 3.

2.—*Ibid.*, Q. I, art. ad 3.

There is thus a certain co-relation. The activity of mind, limited to that grasp of the divine through His finite participations, is essentially incapable of seizing the transcendental unity of its adequate object as it is found in God, Pure Act, but also such activity is incapable of fully expressing, of exhausting, or realising the capacities of the nature whence it springs; it is incapable of revealing its ultimate metaphysical unity. Just as by our natural activity we cannot attain God directly, so our natural activity is incapable of exhausting our rational nature's full capacities. It is just the antinomy of finite intelligence that it cannot be reduced fully to act by its own co-natural faculty. Limited in its activity to a relatively final end, the human mind demands necessarily a really final end for its complete intelligibility; it has a natural desire of God.

Action reveals man to himself. He has but to analyse his action for a few moments to see that there must be a final end. When we have exhausted all the possible motives for action we must arrive ultimately at a final satisfying one, otherwise we shall not act at all; we cannot embark on the infinite. There must be a final end, that is, something that we must wish for itself, and in virtue of which all else is wished. And this presents itself to us under the abstract form of our ultimate good, that which is capable of giving the full perfection of which we are capable.

This abstract good cannot be dissevered from its relation to God. For, as we have just pointed out, the search for our perfection is equivalently a tendency to God. The imperfect goods that present themselves are impotent to move the will. And hence, when it is attracted by the good in general it is because God is the good as such, goodness itself, that alone which is capable of satisfying will, and, therefore, alone capable of moving it. Ontologically it is because the will seeks God that it can wish any particular good¹; and implicitly this is to desire God.

1.—Nihil habet rationem appetibilis nisi per similitudinem primæ bonitatis.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 2, ad 1; Cf. *Sent.*, lib. IV, dist. 49, Q. I, art. 3. vol.II; *De Malo*, Q. XVI, art. 8; Ia., Q. LVII, art. 4; *De Verit.*, Q. VIII, art. 13.

Equivalently, therefore, as well as implicitly, there is in the human mind a desire of God. Its orientation is metaphysically towards God, whom implicitly it seeks, whom equivalently it desires, and to whom, as it were, the magnet of its course is set.

Rejecting Cajetan's conception of natural beatitude, we begin to see that St. Thomas does not really "wander," but insists on the metaphysical necessity in virtue of which God, because first cause of being, is necessarily the final end of all. When we have situated mind in this metaphysical context of a return of things to God, we grasp the spirit in which he approached the problem. We realise that we have here to do not with a mere psychological arresting point or term; we need to look beyond to the objective final end which is none other than God Himself. And hence, the question of man's desire of God does not dwindle down to a mere psychological possibility; it is the very warp and woof of his metaphysic. St. Thomas' research, therefore, is a metaphysical analysis of the rational's fundamental relation to God. The prime interest is one that concerns the natural dynamism of mind's search of ultimate perfection, as discovered in the *naturale desiderium*, which is but another name for the nature's tendency towards this perfection.

So far there has not yet been question of will as will, as faculty of choice and deliberation. The imperious necessity of tending towards the good leaves no choice as to the creature's tendency towards its perfection. Perfection is that which dominates man's being, and after which he pants. He cannot do otherwise than seek his good; he may deceive himself in his choice; but he cannot deny the metaphysical law of his being. The law of the finite as such impels it to seek the final end, to tend towards that which is capable of realising it perfectly.

It was God who placed this primary and fundamental urge in the creature; it is crystallised, as it were, in the finite's nature. Creation and conservation, which is but creation continued, determines the first movement of return, and sustains it at every moment; at the source of man's life, thought

and action there is the first ineffable touch of God impelling, attracting and converging to a final unity this trinity of human nature.

The deepest secret of mind, in St. Thomas' metaphysical analysis, is the attraction that God holds for it. And mind, as we have seen, he places in the forefront of the movement of return to God, which unites all creation in sympathy, harmony and order. He has thus shown, how the impulse and the urge towards perfection which struggle upwards from the lowest being, is carried on and exalted in the order of mind and spirit.

When we come to consider in detail this urge as it manifests itself in conscious life, in a quest for beatitude, in a thirst for truth, and in a pursuit of the perfect, we shall realise in a more striking manner the dynamism of rational creation. But at present it is necessary, once and for all, to mark the result of the metaphysical analysis that has been made. The metaphysical aspect is necessarily that which is deepest, most extensive, and all-pervasive, and it is essential to keep the thesis of the natural desire of God on this plane.

It is not, therefore, primarily a question of choice or election. At the very heart of its being, the intellectual creature must find this impulse, this movement towards God. Whatever may be the light or shade that plays on the surface of consciousness, there is the deeper secret of his being. St. Thomas, analysing the intellectual movement as such, found therein a desire of God.

(1.) SCOTUS AND ST. THOMAS.

Many are deterred from admitting such a natural desire of God, because historically there was a certain system in which this tendency of nature to the supernatural was particularly emphasised. As is well known, Duns Scotus put forward the view that the vision of God, the end of man, was "natural, though to be obtained supernaturally",¹ whereas it cannot

1.—*Oxon.* I, dist. 1, Q. I, Prol., n. 12.

be denied that for St. Thomas the ultimate end which is God is supernatural and to be acquired only by grace.

It is remarkable that each successive interpreter of St. Thomas, particularly within the Dominican tradition, has thought it necessary to preface his remarks with a close refutation of Scotus. Cajetan does so,¹ Sylvester Ferrariensis also,² and quite recently P. Gardeil has covered the old ground.³

Now we believe that this preoccupation with Scotus has really obscured the issues, where it is question of grasping the thought of Aquinas. It happens in this way. Scotus emphasised very much the opposition between the will as nature and will as source of free acts; he placed a marked opposition between will as nature and the elective act of the will.⁴ But where the confusion arises, from the view-point of Thomistic exegesis, is when Scotus goes on to speak of the free or elective act of will as *elicit*, thus introducing an opposition between the innate tendency of will as nature and the elicited act of will. This is quite in keeping with Scotus' view of will and of the voluntarism currently attributed to him. Scotus did not view the volitional process as St. Thomas had done, in terms of reason and appetite. He placed a marked emphasis on the distinction between the actual *fiat* of the will, the *velle elicitum*, and the mere tendency

1.—Comment. in Ia-IIae., Q. I, art. 7.

2.—Comment. in C.G., lib. I, cap. V. Sylvester, however, points out very clearly the divergency between St. Thomas and Scotus on the question of natural appetite: *Aliter accipit Scotus naturalem inclinationem et finem naturalem et aliter Sanctus Thomas. Ipse enim Scotus accipit naturalem inclinationem pro inclinatione mere naturali consequente naturam et excludente cognitionem . . . S. Thomas autem per inclinationem naturalem intelligit non inclinationem naturae oppositum inclinationi quae sequitur cognitionem.*—Comm. lib. I, cap. V. For the desire of knowledge as a "natural" appetite. Cf. *Ibid.*, cap. IV.

3.—*La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique*, Paris, 1927, pp. 272-279.

4.—*Loquendi de appetitu naturali*, voluntas quicquid appetit, appetit propter beatitudinem; quia secundum appetitum naturalem appetit secundum quod est perfectio ejus: sed quaecumque perfectio appetitus naturalis est ejus perfectio in ordine ad ultimum ejus perfectionem . . . Si quaestio autem quaerat de appetitu voluntatis, prout est actus *elicitus*, sic dico quod non oportet quod voluntas appetat quicquid appetit propter finem ultimum.—*Oxon.*, IV, dist. 49, Q. IX, n. 18. Cf. *Ibid.*, dist. 1, Q. IV, n. 10.

or motive of "natural inclination".¹ And if Scotus allowed the necessity of knowledge for acts of the will, it was not that same necessity which St. Thomas recognised; for Scotus this dependence was *de facto* rather than *de jure*. As a consequence, there is in Scotus an opposition between innate appetite and elicited acts, which is quite misleading if applied to St. Thomas. On such a view all that would be natural would be the innate tendency in its crudest state, as it were, and we should have the will tending towards the supernatural *pondere naturae suae*. It would follow on such a view, therefore, that the elicited act as such was something adventitious.

For St. Thomas, there cannot be any such hard and fast distinction or opposition as that indicated by Scotus. We are here in presence of the real difference between the intellectualism of Aquinas and the voluntarism of Scotus. With St. Thomas will ultimately derives from intellect. In a being completely identical with itself, present to itself in the perfect identity of pure act, there is necessarily knowledge which is precisely the identity of being with itself—thought of thought—and present to itself in the full identity of perfect knowledge, there must also be that affirmation of self which is the fundamental meaning of volition. And it is the different relations to knowledge which determine the modality of tendency or will. Will is the very appetite of intellectual nature, and its attitude to its own proper object, the good in general, supposes knowledge. But for all that, this attitude of the will does not cease to be a *natural inclination*.²

1.—Commenting on the text of St. Augustine (XIII *De Trinit.*, C. 5) Omnes beati esse volunt, idque unum ardentissime appetunt, et propter hoc caetera quaecumque appetunt, Scotus writes: Augustinus non intelligit de volitione *actuali*; loquitur ergo de volitione *habituali* et *aptitudinali*, qua videlicet, ipsa voluntas prona est ut statim inclinetur ad actum volendi beatitudinem, si actualiter offeratur sibi ab intellectu.—*Oxon.*, I, d. 1, Q. IV, n. 19. Si intelligitur de appetitu *naturali*, verum est, si autem pro appetitu *libero*, actu scilicet, *elicito*, non est verum universaliter sed in pluribus.—*Ibid.*, n. 10.

2.—Hoc (id quod est naturaliter volitum) est bonum in communi in quod voluntas naturaliter tendit sicut etiam quaelibet potentia in suum objectum; et etiam ipse finis ultimus, qui hoc modo se habet in appetibilibus sicut prima principia demonstrationum in intelligibilibus; et universaliter omnia

The real opposition for St. Thomas is not, as Scotus held, between will as nature and the elicited acts of will, but between will as *nature* and the will as *elective*. P. De Broglie, indicating the false opposition so frequently made, even by Thomists themselves, between innate tendency of will and the elicited act, seems to have gone to another extreme. "To seek," he says, "in the will something other than elicit appetite is to seek something other than will itself."¹ We should rather make a distinction. To seek something other in the will, *as act*, yes, for as act there is only place for elicited acts; but what we are really seeking to know is the nature whence proceeds such acts, and it is by means of its acts the nature of the will as tendency, expresses itself.

Now we cannot but think that the eminent Thomist, P. Gardeil, has been led into this same opposition. For he also opposes in a marked way natural appetite and elicit act. Speaking of the desire of God's vision he says: "It appears precisely as an elicited desire, arising during the course of the exercise of our natural knowledge of God by created effects, *hence as something adventitious*, which engrafts itself on our natural tendencies."² Again, he writes: "If this desire is natural, it does not form part of primordial nature. An element, stranger to the constitution of our being, *adventitious then*, has been introduced during the course of the normal functioning of our vital faculties, namely the knowledge of creatures as effects of God, and it is in setting in action this knowledge that we arrive at eliciting this desire, natural, therefore, in this that it arises out of the normal usage of our natural faculties. Theologians call this an elicited appetite in opposition to innate desire."³

illa quae conveniunt volenti secundum suam naturam. Non enim per voluntatem appetimus solum ea quae pertinet ad potentiam voluntatis sed etiam ea quae ad singulas potentias et ad totum hominem. Unde naturaliter homo vult non solum objectum voluntatis, sed etiam alia quae conveniunt aliis potentis, ut cognitionem veri quaequae convenit intellectui, et esse et vivere et huiusmodia alia quae respiciunt consistentiam naturalem.—Ia-IIae., Q. X., art. 1.

1.—De la place du surnaturel dans la philosophie de S. Thomas.—*Recherches de science religieuse*, XIV (1924), pp. 197 sqq.

2.—*Op. cit.*, p. 281.

3.—*Ibid.*

In view of the Thomistic account of will, as found in St. Thomas himself, we confess we have no small difficulty in understanding the purport of this eminent Thomist's remarks. If, as he says, that, because the desire of God arises as an elicit appetite due to the functioning of knowledge, it is, therefore, something adventitious, we should say that on the same principle man's intuition of first principles, which is only possible once the psychological process of knowledge is in action with its implied dependence on sense knowledge, is not natural. Now it can scarcely be contested that for St. Thomas such an intuition is natural.¹ P. Gardeil's remarks apply to Scotus, but why allow Scotus remove one from the Thomistic orbit? To say, because created effects are needed to stimulate that dynamic movement of thought which takes place in knowledge, that therefore, something adventitious has been introduced, then in this sense there is something "adventitious" in every working of the human mind, seeing that in the beginning it is a *tabula rasa*. Again his remark would be apposite as against Scotus, but for St. Thomas there was not at all the same opposition between natural and elicit, which is only another way of saying that there was not for him the same opposition between natural appetite and knowledge as such, between will and intellect. For St. Thomas the opposition is to be placed, not between the innate tendency and the elicit act, but is to be found among the elicit acts themselves. Scotus, emphasising the will as sole cause has not at all the same insistence on knowledge that we find in St. Thomas, and, accordingly, the opposition that Scotus marked must disappear from St. Thomas. The following citation could not be clearer: "Appetite," he says, "has regard to the end, and to those things which lead to the end; and out of this

1.—Secundum hoc illud dicitur esse *naturale* rei, quod convenit ei secundum suam substantiam, et hoc est quod per se inest rei. In omnibus autem, ea quae non per se insunt, reducuntur in aliquid quod per se inest, sicut in primum. Et ideo necesse est quod hoc modo accipiendo naturam, semper principium in his quae conveniunt rei sit naturale. Et hoc manifeste apparet in intellectu; nam principia intellectualis cognitionis sunt naturaliter nota. Similiter etiam principium motuum voluntariorum oportet esse aliquid naturaliter volitum.—Ia-IIae., Q. X, art. 1.

must arise *the diversity among the acts elicited by the will.*"¹ Again, he writes : " The will may have a two-fold action : one which belongs to it according to its nature, that is, in so far as it tends towards its own object absolutely ; and this action is attributed to the will *simpliciter*, as for instance to wish or desire, *though for this act an act of reason is necessary.* It has, however, another act which belongs to it according to that which comes to it from the impression of reason as such. For as it is proper to reason to order and arrange, as often as we find in will a certain ordering or arranging of things, such an act of will is not to be regarded as of the will absolutely, but as of the will in relation to reason."² In both cases the reference to intellect is clear, in the absolute act of will, as well as in that with the more immediate reference to reason.

The real opposition for St. Thomas is to be found among the elicited acts of the will themselves, and this opposition is that of will conceived as nature and will as principle of choice, that is, between the natural act of the will and the elective. Further, the will as nature is determined in relation to the final end, and though as elective it is free, yet the fundamental tendency to the final end must be retained ; it is that which renders possible the action of will presupposed in every choice. " Though intellect," he says, " may be regarded as acting from itself in certain cases, yet there are certain things prescribed for it by nature, as for instance the first principles and the final end."³ Even in the proper action of the will as elective we must find a participation in the will as nature, for the simple reason that will arises out of the particular nature of mind.⁴

Just as this confusion arose in which the elicited act of will was opposed to the innate tendency of the will, so also, has this same elicited will been confounded with an actual willing in the sense of *explicit* desire of something. And as such an

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. XII, art. 2.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 13. Cf. *Comp. Theol.*, cap. CVII ; C.G., lib. III, cap. XXVI ; Ia-IIae., Q. XII, art. 2.

3.—Ia., Q. XVIII, art. 3.

4.—Ia-IIae., Q. X, art. 1, ad. 1.

explicit desire presupposes knowledge of its object, a desire of God's vision would presuppose a knowledge of its possibility, or at least of such supernatural effects as would suggest such a possibility.

It is necessary to recall here, that for St. Thomas, the question of the desire of God's vision is primarily one of the metaphysical analysis of the movement of the rational creature towards its perfection. We have seen the intellectual creation pervaded through and through by the movement of return to God. This tendency finds expression in the movement of will ; and also, we shall see, in that of intellect. But as will designates properly the appetite of the intellectual nature, we are for the moment confining our attention to it. We have seen that the will desires the good because it desires God, whom we have designated as the anonymous object of all its efforts.

A clear insight into the Saint's mind may be had by taking up a concrete instance where the question might have assumed this particular form for him. It brings us back to the variation we have remarked between the *Commentary on the Sentences* and his later work, *De Malo*. In the early work St. Thomas clearly envisages the desire of the beatific vision as an explicit desire ; in the *De Malo* he speaks of the innate tendency of will, always recalling of course, that for St. Thomas innate tendency of will has its own particular meaning.

In the *Commentary on the Sentences* St. Thomas admits that the children who die without baptism are aware that they are deprived of eternal life, but do not grieve, knowing their lack of proportion to such an end.¹ "As for desiring the vision of God, we must distinguish," he says, "between a full and complete desire, which has to do with something to which one is ordained, and a desire which is a mere velleity, and which may well have to do merely with impossible things. In the first instance, lack of realisation would bring with it sorrow ; in the second such would not be the case, for the object would be desired simply, but on condition of its possibility."

1.—*Sent.*, lib. II, dist. 33, Q. II, art. 2.

In the *De Malo*, however, it is no longer question of an actually explicit desire, for the simple reason that such children are not aware that they were intended by God for such a destiny. Yet for all that, and this is significant, St. Thomas implies that they desire the vision of God. That this is so, very clearly appears from the manner in which he solves a difficulty which he proposes. This objection runs as follows: "Punishment, by its very nature, implies something contrary to the will of the person punished; but that which is opposed to a person's will is a cause of grief. Hence if these children endure any punishment at all they must also grieve." To appreciate this objection it is necessary to remark that St. Thomas wishes to retain the *poena* that these children have incurred and at the same time to exclude sadness. Now this *poena* is precisely the privation of the vision of God. And the reality of such a punishment is in question as long as it is not in some sense contrary to will. How, then, is he going to retain at the same time the presence of punishment and the absence of grief? He does so by aid of a distinction. "Punishment," he says, "does not always correspond to an *actual* willing. But it must be contrary either to an actual willing, or to an habitual will, or at least a *natural inclination of the will*."¹ Nothing could more clearly affirm the presence of a natural inclination of the will to the vision of God. For evidently it is question of this vision, seeing that its loss is precisely the punishment incurred.

But, it will be asked, how does will desire that which is entirely unknown? For we may recall the mean solution, as given by St. Thomas, implies that these children know that they are made for beatitude, and that beatitude consists in the acquisition of the highest good, but that it consists, as he puts it, "in that destiny revealed to us by faith, they do not know."²

The reply to this difficulty is really contained within the limits of the solution given by the Saint himself. If, on the one hand, he says that these children have not the

1.—*De Malo*, Q. V, art. 3, ad 3.

2.—*De Malo*, Q. V, art. 3.

knowledge which faith gives, and if, on the other, he holds that they desire the vision of God, it must be that the attitude of their will towards beatitude in general implies objectively a desire of God's vision. He does not say that they desire the vision of God explicitly with all the precision that faith imparts, rather he denies that it is so. But what he does really exclude when he says that they have not the knowledge given by supernatural faith, so it seems to us, is the *fact* of their destination to this supernatural vision.

Wishing to retain at the same time their natural felicity, and the punishment entailed by original sin, the only way left to him was that blissful ignorance of their being definitely excluded from something to which originally they were destined. For, as he points out,¹ loss of the beatific vision is possible in two ways. In one case it is a mere absence due simply to nature's incapacity in regard to such a vision, which is merely the lack of what nature is incapable of acquiring, nothing more nothing less. But he says the absence of God's vision may arise in another way.² There may be something that positively excludes the vision. Such is the case in point, because of the sin of nature inherited. But to know that they were elevated to such an end, and that through no fault of their own they were deprived of it would not have been conducive to their felicity.

It is also important to remark that the punishment of which he speaks is neither actual nor habitual. It is not actual because not opposed to an actual will or desire of this end, nor habitual, which is perhaps more significant, that is if they knew of it they would suffer ; but it is against the natural tendency of the will as such.³

Nowhere does St. Thomas exclude from reason knowledge of the *possibility* of the divine vision, and he so retains the tendency arising out of intellectual nature as such, that on that, he may base his reasoning. The delicacy with which

1.—*De Malo*, Q. IV, art. 1, ad 14.

2.—Aliud est enim non debere habere quod non habet rationem poenae, sed defectus tantum, et aliud debere non habere quod habet rationem poenae.—*De Malo*, Q. V, art. 1, ad 15.

3.—Cf. *Comp. Theol.*, cap. CXXII.

he treats of the sin of the fallen angels is, in this respect, remarkable. We have seen that he first excluded the demons' desire to be equal to God, as impossible. Neither did the demons desire to be entirely exempt from God's dominion. Rather they looked to obtaining such a vision by their own forces. And from this it would follow at least that they conceived such a vision as objectively *in se* possible. "Nobody tends towards that which is conceived to be impossible."¹ It could well be that there was a certain ignorance on the demons' part as to the precise rôle of grace; it is so that St. Thomas explains their fall, admitting that they knew all that it was possible for nature to know. And thus, it was also possible for them to deceive themselves in desiring to know God by their natural powers.²

It will have been noticed what a light this whole question, both of the sin of the angels and the natural felicity of the unbaptised children, is calculated to throw on what may be derived, according to St. Thomas, from reason as such in regard to the desire of God's vision. He has admitted in these children a natural tendency towards it; he goes further, as it were, in the case of the fallen angels, for he also admits in them a tendency towards God as He is in Himself, notwithstanding the fact, he says, that it implied a tendency to a good which exceeded their natural powers.³ But there is a final point that shows with what tenacity, if we may so

1.—Under elinquitur quod intellectus ejus (diaboli) non poterat apprehendere aequalitatem sui ad Deum sub ratione possibilis. Nullus autem tendit in id quod apprehendit ut impossibile . . . Unde relinquitur quod . . . non potuit appetere absolute non esse Deo subjectus: tum quia hoc est impossibile, nec potuit in ejus apprehensione cadere quasi possibile.—*De Malo*, Q. XVI, art. 3.

2.—Angeli autem omnes sic conditi sunt, ut quidquid pertineat ad naturalem perfectionem eorum statim a principio suae creationis habuerint: tamen erant in potentia ad supernaturalia bona, quae per Dei gratiam consequi poterant . . . Fuit ergo primum peccatum diaboli in hoc quod ad consequendam supernaturalem beatitudinem, quae in plena visione Dei consistit, non se erexit in Deum, tanquam finalem perfectionem ex ejus gratia desiderans cum angelis sanctis; sed eam consequi voluit per virtutem suae naturae . . . Et quia habere finalem beatitudinem per virtutem suae naturae . . . est proprium Deo manifestum est quantum ad hoc appetit diabolus Dei aequalitatem.—*De Malo*, Q. XVI, art. 3.

3.—Voluntas angeli peccantis tendebat quidem in id ad quod natura ejus ordinabatur licet esset bonum excedens bonum naturae ipsius.—*Ibid.*, ad 12.

speak, St. Thomas held to this tendency to God as He is in Himself. It is where St. Thomas undertakes to solve the objection, with which we have opened the discussion of a desire which outpassed knowledge.

His reply is briefly as follows : It could happen that intelligence knows something without possessing it, and that will might seek it as known. Though intelligence may not have perfect knowledge of itself for instance, yet because it can apprehend what such a perfect knowledge would imply, the will may tend towards it and, therefore, seek it, just as inversely intellect may apprehend what is not yet in the possession of the will. And in this way, he remarks, it would not follow that the devil desired something that he could not have apprehended.¹

This last mentioned distinction of St. Thomas may aptly be applied to the whole question of the natural desire of the beatific vision. "Intelligence may know something which it does not possess, and will may tend towards such an object as known." Intelligence may conceive in what perfect beatitude consists ; reason proves that outside of God it is not to be found. And so it is that will, as it were, outsteps reason in search of that which reason does not yet possess. Could St. Thomas have more clearly said that intellectual nature as such tends beyond itself to the immediate possession of God ?

(2.) AN OBJECTION.

When we have indicated the possible influence of the Scotist teaching on those who, in reaction against its views, reject the idea of a natural tendency towards the vision of God, we recognise that, though the previous discussion has been of considerable utility in fixing the fundamental difference that separates St. Thomas from Duns Scotus in their views of will as the tendency of rational nature, yet the case for these writers, as against our own position, has not been fully stated.

1.—*De Malo*, Q. XVI, art. 3.

Their position may be said to arise out of a fundamental objection which interposes itself as an obstacle which would intercept the dynamism of the creature to God as He is in Himself. If the theory of natural beatitude as something final and saturating has had a certain vogue, here we are in presence of a difficulty that has proved a stumbling-block to various writers.

For many, the dynamism of the intellectual nature takes it to the frontier of its natural object; it is determined to the good in general, to beatitude in the abstract. But beyond that the question of the desire of God's vision assumes an entirely new sense. The only meaning it could have, they say, is that of a vague elicit aspiration which might have for object the possible or the impossible.

Before we realise the force of this objection, let us for a moment emphasise its popularity. As long as the controversy on the desire of God's vision has gone on, this same objection has arisen, and to-day it is put by those whom we consider to have written most pertinently on this question.

In this connection it is a pleasure to cite the article of P. Mulard, O.P. Of those who assume what we may call, for lack of a better word, a conservative attitude, it is he who, perhaps, has seen most clearly the philosophical implication of the whole discussion. When St. Thomas speaks of a natural desire in the celebrated chapters of the Third Book of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, "we are," he says, "in presence of a desire of nature purely and simply."¹ And here we are already far beyond the doctrine of Cajetan. For P. Mulard such a desire is as natural as the intuition of first principles. "As for the opposition of nature and the supernatural," he adds, "that has nothing to do with the proof, or at least does not enter into the perspective, especially as his adversaries did not bother about such a distinction."² The object of such a desire, however, is not that of the vision of God, but that of knowledge as such." He admits,

1.—Désir naturel de connaître et vision béatifique.—*Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIV (1925), pp. 11-12.

2.—*Ibid.*, p. 13.

moreover, that as one listens to the appeal of this deep desire of knowledge, and ascends the series of causes, one finally arrives, as it were, at the vestibule of the divine Substance itself. But then, he says, "it becomes question of elicited desire." The reason for this alteration, overlooking for the moment the inappropriateness of opposing natural and elicited, is that the important objection intervenes. "In man," said St. Thomas, "there is the desire of his ultimate end, *in communi*, that is, he desires naturally to be complete in perfection. But as to that in which this completion is to be found, whether in virtues, or in knowledge, or in pleasure, that is not determined for him by nature."¹

As at first sight appears, from the foregoing citation, the intellectual nature, because of its natural object which is the good in general, is not determined either to the natural or the supernatural beatitude. As long as this indetermination is not removed, nothing can be deduced from the natural dynamism of the creature towards perfection. There are only two alternatives, it would seem, either to rest with a vague desire which would prove nothing as to its object, or to fall back on Cajetan whose theory removes the said indetermination, by an appeal to the positive ordaining of nature by God to a supernatural end. "Even supposing the possibility of this vision," wrote Ramellini, "and the certain knowledge of this possibility, though it would be possible to show that there is in the rational nature a capacity for this vision, yet as regards the desire, whether elicited or innate, of this vision I do not think it possible to demonstrate it, except we suppose the elevation of this nature. And, further, because the object of will is merely the good in general, this points to a desire of God as author of nature, not as author of the supernatural."²

It is sufficient to place the text just cited in its context to realise that the inferences based on it are unjustified. The whole article in which it appears is devoted principally to

1.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 7.

2.—*Divus Thomas* (Placentiae), annus XIX, vol. VI, summarium fasc. XXXIII, XXXIV, p. 516.

indicating the differences that arise, from point of view of appetite and desire, between the different orders in which desire is to be found ; and in particular between the animal and the rational appetite. The Saint is really contrasting the attitude of man with that of natural things which move to their object *pondere naturae*, to their one unique object. "In other things," he says, "there is a tendency towards one determinate object, just as heavy objects are attracted downwards by force of gravitation, by their own weight, and the animal is attracted by that which is suitable to his nature, but man is endowed with the tendency towards the good *in communi*, that is, he tends naturally to his complete perfection, *ut scilicet appetat naturaliter se esse completum in bonitate*. But in what this completion consists, whether it is to be found in virtues, or in knowledge, or in pleasure, that is not determined for him by nature."¹

Now what precisely does St. Thomas mean by *non est ei determinatum a natura* ? If we are to accept the common adage, *formaliter semper loquitur Sanctus Thomas*, is it not evident that its meaning must be derived from the context ? And that implies simply, that for man the object of his tendency is not determined in the same way as it is for beings of lower orders, where the object of their tendency is unique, determined for them by their nature. Man is free, he must employ intelligence to discern where the true object of his nature is to be found. The wide extent of the good in general allows this, so that he is no longer determined univocally towards particular objects. Out of this freedom, will arise his merit. And the very heading of the article in question is : *Utrum aliquis mereatur volendo illud quod de necessitate vult* ?

When St. Thomas speaks, in effect, of this difference of rational and animal nature, it is just in the sense which we have indicated. "Nature," he says, "differs in its causality from will, by its determination to one thing, *quod natura*

1.—Aliis enim rebus inditus est naturalis appetitus alicujus rei determinatae, sicut gravi quod sit deorsum, et unicuique animali id quod est sibi conveniens secundum naturam suam, sed homini inditus est appetitus ultimi finis in communi ut scilicet appetat naturaliter se esse completum in bonitate sui.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 7.

determinata est ad unum, whereas will is not so determined. The reason is that the effect resembles its cause, and in the case of the lower orders there is merely the unique cause of its tendency, which is their nature. But it is just the property of the rational nature to be the possessor of many forms, and at the source of any act of will there may be innumerable reasons or motives."¹

At least this discussion has the merit of clearly indicating how far removed St. Thomas is from admitting a tendency to the supernatural that could be called a *pondus naturae* in any crude sense. Whereas material things tend directly without the intermediary of any apprehension, and the animal tends to the unique object of its limited nature, the intellectual appetite seeks the very *raison d'être* of appetibility, and it is in function of that that it seeks the particular objects.²

But is the natural tendency of will thereby excluded? We should say that not only is it not excluded, but the contrary is clearly insinuated. For, when he says, "that the will is directed to the ultimate end, *in communi*," he translated that immediately by a tendency on the part of will towards its complete perfection.³ And if we turn to those places where he treats *ex professo* of beatitude we shall find that for him the very meaning of this beatitude *in communi*

1.—Voluntas et natura secundum hoc differunt in causando, quod natura *determinata est ad unum*; sed voluntas non est determinata ad unum. Cujus ratio est; quia effectus assimilatur formae agentis per quam agit. Manifestum est autem quod unius rei non est nisi una forma naturalis per quam res habet esse. Unde quale ipsum est tale fecit. Sed forma per quam voluntas agit, non est una tantum, sed sunt plures, secundum quod sunt plures rationes intellectae. Unde quod voluntate agitur, non est tale quale est agens, sed quale vult, et illud intelligit esse agens.—Ia., Q. XLI, art. 2. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXV, art. 1.

2.—Appetitus ergo naturalis tendit in ipsum rem appetibilem *sine aliqua apprehensione rationis appetibilitatis*: Appetitus autem superior qui est voluntas tendit directe in rationem appetibilitatis.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXV, art. 1. It is important to bear in mind the constant opposition that St. Thomas marks between the different tendencies of the material, animal and intellectual orders. By so doing the scandal of a *pondus naturae* is avoided. Cf. Ia., Q. CIII, art. 1, ad 1; Ia., Q. XIX, art. 1, ad 9; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1; Ia., Q. LXIX, art. 1; C.G., lib. II, cap. XVI; *Ibid.*, cap. XXIV; Ia-IIae., Q. VI, art. 1.

3.—Sed homini inditus est appetitus ultimi finis sui in communi, ut scilicet appetat naturaliter se esse completum in bonitate.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 7.

is that it should be the "perfect good" which fully satisfies the tendency of will. And hence, he says, "to seek beatitude is nothing other than to desire that the tendency of will be satiated."¹ The truth is that beatitude may be taken in a two-fold way, as that which *implicitly* is willed by all, and as that which *explicitly* is desired. And if implicitly everyone wishes for the full satisfaction of will, which can come only from the immediate possession of God, yet explicitly the vision of God is not necessarily wished by all, because they are not in presence of that compelling vision itself, which would leave no doubt as to its being the only object of its implicit desire.²

In a word, there is nothing to indicate that for St. Thomas man's beatitude, taken objectively, is indeterminated, or that there is a similar indetermination in will as the natural tendency of the rational nature. For will participates in the direction of nature to a unique end which is necessary for its intelligibility.³ In desiring beatitude it desires God implicitly, and in tending towards perfection it is tending equivalently to God Himself. And for this reason, so far as actual realisation goes, there is a tendency to God as Author of natural perfection; but that, as we have seen, does not exclude the implicit and equivalent tendency to God as He is in Himself.

The will, however, as faculty of election is free to discover wherein its true beatitude consists, and so to order itself

1.—*Beatitudo dupliciter potest considerari: uno modo secundum communem rationem beatitudinis, et sic necesse est quod omnis homo beatitudinem velit. Ratio autem beatitudinis communis est ut sit bonum perfectum sicut dictum est . . . Cum autem bonum sit objectum voluntatis perfectum bonum est alicujus quod totaliter ejus voluntati satisfacit. Unde appetere beatitudinem nihil aliud est quam appetere ut voluntas satietur: quod quilibet vult.*—Ia-IIae., Q. V, art. 8.

2.—*Alio modo possumus loqui de beatitudine, secundum specialem rationem, quantum ad id in quo beatitudo consistit: et sic non omnes cognoscunt beatitudinem, quia nesciunt cui rei communis ratio beatitudinis conveniat.*—Ia-IIae., Q. V, art. 8. *Bonum autem perfectum, quod est Deus, necessarium quidem connexionem habet cum beatitudine hominis, quia sine eo non potest homo esse beatus; verumtamen necessitas hujus connexionis non manifeste apparet homini in hac vita, quia Deum per essentiam non videt; et ideo etiam voluntas hominis in hac vita non ex necessitate Deo adhaeret.*—*De Malo*, Q. III, art. 3.

3.—*Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. XIII, art. 1; De Verit., Q. XXII, art. 15.*

according to the objective order of things, and its own inherent tendency. If notwithstanding its natural tendency the creature is free where it is question of an explicit and elective desire of God as He is in Himself, it is because as long as man is absent from this vision itself he does not see with compelling evidence the necessity of this connection between the vision of God and his only true beatitude. Accordingly the tendency of the rational nature rises into the sphere opened up by the vast extent of mind's adequate object, being, and hence, will is not constrained to accept particular objects.

Accordingly, when St. Thomas goes on to say "that man, aided by divine grace apprehends some particular good as his beatitude, in which truly his beatitude consists, he merits, not because he desires beatitude which naturally he seeks, but because he desires this particular object, as for instance the vision of God, in which, nevertheless, objectively his beatitude consists, an object, *which naturally he does not seek.*"¹ Evidently we must take the opposition in the sense indicated. That is, this special object, the vision of God is not desired "naturally" in the sense that man is determined to it in such a way that it imposes itself on his will, not only as a tendency of nature, but as a faculty of choice. Thus to isolate from its context the simple phrase *ex hoc quod appetit hoc speciale objectum quod non naturaliter appetit* is calculated to give a wrong impression, and is intended evidently to exclude the natural tendency of will to the vision of God. Now what St. Thomas excludes is first of all the tendency of will as faculty of choice, that is, that even though objectively the vision of God is true beatitude, man remains free and is, therefore, capable of merit. There is no obstacle to man's elective choice where it is question of the supernatural. The necessary connection of his beatitude

1.—Quando ergo ex propria ratione, adjutus divina gratia, apprehendit aliquod speciale bonum, ut suam beatitudinem, in quo vero sua beatitudo consistit, tunc meretur, *non ex hoc quod appetit beatitudinem quam naturaliter appetit, sed ex hoc quod appetit hoc speciale quod non naturaliter appetit, ut visionem Dei, in quo tamen secundum rei veritatem sua beatitudo consistit.*—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 7.

with God, nor the equivalence of his tendency, does not appear with that evidence which would constrain him in conscious life to tend necessarily to God's vision.¹ On the contrary, because it is a good beyond nature, there can be no question of his accepting it electively without a supernatural aid. Further, unless aided by God, the creature decides for the supernatural end, there can be no question of an *efficacious* tendency to God's vision. Aided by grace, and by his free choice in favour of the supernatural, the creature is lifted out of the natural plane, where formally he attains God as Principle of natural perfection, and implicitly and equivalently tends towards Him as He is in Himself, to the plane of supernatural life, where he may merit that degree of glory destined for him by God.

1.—See Appendix B.

CHAPTER IV.

WHERE TRUE BEATITUDE IS TO BE FOUND.

WE have seen that there can be but one final end of human activity, but realising the antinomy of man's nature, that of itself, by its own forces, it is incapable of acquiring its ultimate perfection, we had to recognise that the trend of its dynamism was apparently interrupted. A certain fluctuation seemed possible because of that indetermination and latitude that the object of its natural faculties seemed to allow. It was objected that, therefore, we could no longer speak of the tendency of the rational creature to God as He is in Himself. We have now to show that, though will and intellect are incapable of realising that full and ultimate perfection of mind as such, yet they reveal the true end, the only object, which is finally and sufficiently capable of perfecting mind in its absolute capacities, and that, therefore, the tendency of the finite mind to God, as tendency, is an unalterable one.

It is characteristic of human intelligence that it conceives beatitude as man's final end ; it is characteristic of the human will that it tends towards this end unalterably. The history of human thought puts us in possession of this very truth ; the deepest instinct of humanity has manifested itself in a search for happiness.

If St. Thomas' contact with the searching analysis of an Augustine or of a Boethius lends at times a certain psychological atmosphere, we must not overlook the fact that there is the deeper preoccupation implied in a metaphysical examination of being. Even for St. Augustine this desire for beatitude was something common to Christian and non-Christian philosophers.¹ By that very fact it illustrated

1.—Cf. Sermo CL, *Opera* ed. Migne, vol.V, p. 809.

for him something elemental, something to be sought in intellectual nature as such. Behind the mirages of false ideals of happiness there is the tendency of the will, which is constant; it is merely man's unhappy privilege to endow the finite with the attraction of the infinite. For all are at one in desiring beatitude; it is the magnet of man's course.

Aquinas' analysis is in function of his metaphysic, and the psychology of man's search for happiness is but the outer seeming of what takes place at the heart of the finite being. The metaphysical principle that governs the creature's return to God he embodies in man's desire for beatitude. To this principle he constantly reverts. It is in his mind when unexpressed; it is that which unifies his arguments and gives them their telling force. Whether it is directly of will that he is speaking and of beatitude in its negative and positive aspects, or whether he is revealing the sense and direction of intellect's dynamism towards truth, he is basing himself on the metaphysical exigencies of perfection.

Beatitude signifies the ultimate perfection of the rational creature, and, hence, it is naturally desired, because all being desires naturally its ultimate perfection;¹ its most perfect operation is the end of every finite being.² But what is required for the complete perfection of the finite mind? What is the highest development of which the rational creature is capable? What is calculated to bring the final appeasing of its dynamic urge? Only when we have answered these questions are we in a position to state in what true beatitude consists and where it is to be found. Having answered them, no vacillation is possible as to the natural desire of such an ultimate perfection. There is no such thing as a two-fold truth, and those who will not admit the conclusion that Aquinas draws cannot procure for themselves the luxury of his searching analysis of the intellectual search for happiness. His premises and his conclusion must stand or fall together.

The Saint's reasoning is, consequently, constantly carried out on the metaphysical plane. And in this he is already

1.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1.

2.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXV.

far beyond his patron in philosophy, Aristotle. Interested in the metaphysical exigencies of beatitude, St. Thomas insists on the fundamental distinction of beatitude as objective and subjective. It can scarcely be said that Aristotle rose to a concept of beatitude that gave the objective its priority over the subjective state. His silence on the question of the priority of pleasure or of vital activity seems calculated,¹ and in his treatise on Friendship he seems to fall back into the merest hedonism. The good man dies because he prefers an enjoyment that would be intense during a period of short duration, to a measured satisfaction of long duration.²

For this reason Aristotle's insistence on the necessity of a final end has not the full significance that such a statement has on the lips of St. Thomas. In the one case there might be merely question of a psychological necessity, in the other there is essentially the reference and tendency beyond the creature's self to the object, the objective final end.

Nor is this the only difference that separates the two philosophers. These divergencies may not be so marked, perhaps. St. Thomas was never solicitous about his own personality; he had not that modern need of marking precisely his contribution to the march of thought. His reform is unobtrusive, and we fail to notice how far he has left the Stagyrte behind. Yet, even when he is most anxious to save Aristotle, he unhesitatingly rejects him. "It might be urged," he says, "that as beatitude is the characteristic perfection of intellectual nature, perfect happiness is the exclusive privilege of such intellectual natures as enjoy a certain eminence in the hierarchy of perfection; and that man, accordingly, could never aspire beyond a realisation of himself in a mere human way, *modo humano*."³ Evidently he has Aristotle in mind. His own opinion is unambiguous. He is explicit as to the impossibility of beatitude in this life, and he usually dismisses the beatitude of Aristotle as

1.—Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. IV, art. 2.

2.—Cf. A. Mansion, L'eudémonisme aristotélicien et la morale thomiste.—*Xenia Thomistica*, Romae, (1925), pp. 422-449.

3.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XLVIII.

"imperfect." ¹ Towards the end of the same chapter of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, in which the objection occurs, there is an epitome of his whole position, in which Aristotle is rejected, and where a transition from the pagan philosopher's *modo humano* to the *modo divino* of Aquinas is very clearly marked.

Aristotle's idea of all being as moved by desire he will throw into relief, and impart to it a meaning that Aristotle could not have surmised. Especially does he widen up and extend the rigid scheme of the Aristotelian universe finding in itself its own perfection, and of a God wrapt up in thought, without a care for mere contingent affairs.

(1.) INADEQUACY OF THE FINITE.

St. Thomas then proceeds, in a masterly fashion, to exclude perfect beatitude from this life, and to show that the very mirages of false beatitude that fill the eyes of men here below are but the reflections of a true oasis. He examines successively these different ideals, and opens the eyes of mind to their relative character and insufficiency, and demonstrates that not only does man deceive himself, and wander from the true way to happiness, but that it is in virtue of something deeper in him he is capable of so erring. It is just the paradox of human nature that it selects a false beatitude, while it tends towards the truth of things, the truth of happiness. ²

Honours, riches, power, renown, and bodily goods, he rejects, we might say, with impatient gesture. ³ Such things could not be unto man a final end. But the soul itself? Here we are getting back to the source of things. If he deigns to consider in detail such things as riches and power, it is merely to illustrate a principle, the principle in effect that gives strength to his master-argument. It appears in

1.—Ia-IIae, Q. III, art. 6, ad 1; *Ibid.*, art. 4, ad 4.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXIV, art. 2, ad 19.

3.—Ia-IIae, Q. II, arts. 1, 2, 3, 4.

his answer as to man's soul being the final end. It is impossible, he declares: "The soul is finite. It is in potency; it is not unto itself its own end."¹

When he epitomises the case against the finite he always brings to the foreground the fundamental principle that must clinch his arguments. It is this: "The universal good is the object of the human will, just as universal truth is that of intellect. Whence it follows that nothing short of the universal good can satisfy the will of man. But the universal good is found in God alone, since the creature is merely a participation in God's goodness. God alone can fully satisfy the aspirations of the human will. God alone is man's beatitude."²

Applied to intelligence, the same argument is equally decisive. For truth being the good of intellect, its final good can only be the essential good, God.³ And precisely for that reason the finite intelligence bears within itself a tendency. Were intelligence perfect, as in God, as identical with being it would be in perfect possession of itself, and exhaust the intelligibility and goodness of being, but considered in itself, as St. Thomas would say, the human intelligence is in potency, it tends.⁴ Its gradual ascent in the conquest of truth bears within it a hope; its fragmentary truths are born of an aspiration after truth itself; its vital force is an infinite desire. "God alone is truth as such," says Aquinas, "and no participated truth can give final perfection to the human mind."⁵

If we wish to realise that St. Thomas on final analysis reverts to the fundamental principle that nothing finite can appease the infinite tendency of the intellectual nature, we have but to examine the different occasions where he confines

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. II, art. 7.

2.—Ia-IIae., Q. II, art. 8.

3.—Ipsium verum est quoddam bonum, secundum quod intellectus res quaedam est, et verum finis ipsius.—Ia., Q. LXXXII, art. 3, ad 1. Cf. *Metaph.*, lib. VI, lect. 4.

4.—Sicut bonum nominat id in quod tendit appetitus, ita verum nominat id in quod tendit intellectus.—Ia., Q. XVI, art. 1.

5.—Quidquid ergo habet veritatem participatam, contemplatum non facit intellectum perfectum ultima perfectione.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 7.

himself to solving the question of man's beatitude summarily and peremptorily, just as when he wishes to synthesise his proofs for God, he goes back to the *Quarta Via* to show that a being which is, but not by itself, necessarily supposes a Being whose very essence is identically His Being.¹ Nor is the analogy devoid of an intimate relation. We select one example.² He is giving a summary proof that beatitude can consist only in the vision of God. The very nerve of the proof is just this, that man cannot be perfectly happy as long as anything remains for him to be desired, and he appeals to intellect to show that its very nature sends it from effect to cause, until it reaches the First Cause of all. He thus draws together both will and intellect to illustrate that the tendency of the nature whence they spring is unappeased except by God Himself.

When we have thus far rendered explicit the underlying principle in function of the exigencies of will and intellect, we have not yet obtained all the light that is possible. We require to look more closely at the concept of beatitude itself, and to realise in what precisely it consists.

The important distinction already mentioned between beatitude in its objective and subjective sense dominates the discussion. As something appertaining to the subject's perfection, beatitude is necessarily to be sought in the creature's activity. Not to itself its own perfection, the finite being must realise itself in action, for that is perfect which is in act. Its nature it possesses as its initial perfection, but its ultimate perfection presupposes the realisation of this initial perfection in action. Activity is the ultimate perfection of such an agent; as long as it is potency it is not perfect; and hence its beatitude, as its ultimate perfection, must also be its ultimate act.³

Now, in virtue of this very distinction of the final end as objective and subjective, St. Thomas concludes that man's beatitude must necessarily consist in the activity of intelligence. For will, as tendency, cannot be said to possess the

1.—Cf. *De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 5; *Ibid.*, art. 7.

2.—*Ia-IIae.*, Q. III, art. 8.

3.—*Ia-IIae.*, Q. III, art. 2.

final perfection which it seeks. That desire as such should be the ultimate end is quite impossible. For desire is that which tends to what it has not yet, and, hence, is opposed to the very nature of the final end. And once desire is excluded, there can be only question, from the will's viewpoint, of enjoyment; but that supposes precisely the possession of the good desired.¹

As a human possession, characteristic of man, the desire of happiness stamps him as a being of a particular order. Now man, as man, is such by his intelligence. Will as the rational tendency bears a close analogy to the tendency of all being to its perfection; it does not mark him off sufficiently. But man is most essentially himself when he seeks truth for truth's sake, and when he employs his intellect to seek it and contemplate it.² We must find in his beatitude that which characterises it as beatitude, and marks it off as its distinctly human prerogative. Its relation to will, however, is not sufficient to mark it off, and so distinguish it as a characteristically human inheritance.³

It would be an error to present the doctrine of St. Thomas in an over-simplified manner, and neglect the many distinctions with which he surrounds this matter. To do so leads to an opposition of will and intelligence that is really alien to his system. For it is just one of the nice points of Thomistic metaphysic that it harmonises these two fundamental faculties, and thereby renders intelligible their unity. Nowhere has he, as a philosopher, been more happy in his search for unity.

It is all the more important to remark that a particular position adopted by the Saint is in danger of being stereotyped. When he opposes intelligence and will, seeing in will a tendency towards things as they are in their objective reality, and intelligence as the intussusception, the assimilation to itself of reality, while we admit the truth of such an opposition, it is only justice to St. Thomas to place this opposition within the wider context of his whole metaphysic.

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXVI; *Quodlibet.*, Q. VIII, art. 19.

2.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXVII.

3.—C.G., cap. XXXVII.

The metaphysic of St. Thomas is just this drawing together of things within the unity of being, for in being there can be no absolute opposition. If he allowed himself the satisfaction of utilising this distinction of will and intelligence within the sphere of the relative, it was because on looking beyond the horizon of the finite he had found an intelligible unity for such apparent discordancy. He did not live at a time when complete opposition was sought between intelligence and will, or where such a varied appeal to the other faculties of the mind was made in search for a solution of life's enigmas, as we have known since Fichte first rid philosophy of things to seek within the realm of mind the elemental immanent principle that unfolds itself in the world's becoming.

Such opposition on the fundamental issues of being was unthinkable for St. Thomas, just as objectively it is impossible. For intellect and will as transcendental faculties of being are necessarily in harmony. This harmony ultimately derives from that grand unison where being, identically itself, knows itself and wills itself. This unity is ever on the horizon of his thought. And that alone explains why his handling of the final end in its relation to intelligence and will is so very delicate, much more delicate than ordinary summary expositions of his theory would lead us to believe.

Having decided for intelligence as that faculty which must ultimately put man in possession of the object of beatitude, he recalls that as object of our beatitude, that towards which we tend, beatitude may be said to appertain to will.¹ As in all being the secret of its dynamism is to be found in nature, so also for the rational creature. It is true that as we advance from the lower orders up to man, there is a characteristic transition. There is thought, the specific element that marks the passage; there is action that henceforth bathes in the light of thought; there is desire and tendency that analogically are one with that of all being, but modified because of the wide expanse that thought opens up, it can never be the unique determinate tendency to a single finite object.²

1.—*Quodlibet.*, VIII, art. 19.

2.—*Ia.*, Q. LXXXVII, art. 4. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1, ad 8.

St. Thomas does not then ignore the important rôle that is to be assigned to will. But as in the lower orders we have had occasion to point out that the apparent emphasis of their dynamic aspect did not endanger the intelligibility of their action, so we have to see how this trinity of thought and love and action is to be reduced to unity.

St. Thomas does so by fixing their immediate origin, by regarding their interplay, but it is ultimately the final end that dominates the very starting point, and interplay, and final unity. The dynamic life of man, unique in its ultimate source and end, is necessarily harmonised in action.

For him the source of tendency is the finite nature as such. Whether it is question of intellect or of will, there is a close dependency on nature. Nature expresses itself in certain fundamental aptitudes. Though intelligence is active in regard to certain objects, yet nature supplies it with certain aptitudes which it cannot deny at the cost of denying itself in its inmost being. "It is not free in its attitude towards first principles that impose their evidence on its acceptance; nor is it free as regards the final end of all its activity which it 'wills,' remarks Aquinas, 'necessarily.'"¹ This is so because of that very relation that links up nature as such with a final end, and this relation necessarily envelops both will and intellect, for on last analysis the tendency towards perfection derives from the nature whence the faculties spring.²

This very deduction of will from intellect is interesting as it makes the carrying on of the unconscious finality of the lower orders. Both faculties, rooted in one nature, and one, in a sense being the principle of the other's action, it is but natural that their activity should be harmonised.³

It is, however, the final end that really dominates. For if St. Thomas looks to nature and to action, it is because in his thought both converge to one unique end, that end to which

1.—Ia., Q. XVIII, art. 3.

2.—Cf. Ia., Q. XIX, art. 1; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1; Ia-IIae., Q. X, art. 1.

3.—Ia., Q. LXXXVII, art. 4. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. III, art. 3, ad 3; *Ibid.*, Q. XXI, art. 3.

the dynamism of nature, for its complete intelligibility, points. Will and intellect proceed from such a nature, and their orientation is to its final end. The final end of will is precisely and identically that of intelligence, for it is the final end of the nature from which both proceed.¹ Since this end can be acquired only by intelligence for will, the convergence of the two faculties is complete.

The good, the object of will, being that which has a value for life, it is not difficult to realise that there is a search in the depths of man's being for life; but it is intelligence that determines, as well as procures, this ultimate life. And thus we are beginning to understand the insistence with which St. Thomas designated intelligence as life, the noblest form of life.² It merely serves to show that on the summits, literature as a "criticism of life," and poetry as "the very image of life expressed in its external truth," rejoins philosophy which is the very eye that reveals poetry to itself, and holds forth beauty, the "good of truth," as the supreme end of man.

(2.) THE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE.

The end of the entire creation is that which is intended by the First Mover, Intelligence; it is the good of intellect, truth.³

But if all creation is in search of truth, it is mind which, imparting the splendour of actual intelligibility to material things, feels most intensely truth's attraction. Mind is made for truth.⁴ Truth is that which awakens to life its insatiable thirst for knowledge. The search for knowledge is characteristically human. Mind participates in the common impulse of the finite towards its perfection, but it outsteps the lower orders in its desire of truth for its own sake. And advancing beyond them it is its sublime privilege to carry on the impulse of all creation. It is through intelligence that

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. X, art. 1.

2.—Ia., Q. XVIII, art. 3.

3.—C.G., lib. I, cap. I.

4.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 7.

not only man's perfection but that of entire creation will be realised. Beatitude will consist in the highest action of the noblest faculty, and as intelligence is that which is noblest in man, and which epitomises all, beatitude must derive from the contemplation of the highest object of intelligence.¹

It is here that St. Thomas is most characteristically himself, for seeing that for him intelligence is the source of life *par excellence*, man's perfect beatitude will be the fullest realisation of life that is possible. It is here that modern philosophy must find the answer to its aspirations when the reaction against intelligence shall have run its course.

In what will this highest act of life consist? To reply, we have but to regard the pursuit of truth in knowledge, to seize the rhythm of mind's tendency towards its perfection, its proper good, truth. We shall first examine knowledge in its most general aspect, as a search for truth, and thereby hope to reveal the instinctive attitude of reflecting mind in contact with its ambient reality. Doing so we are envisaging the very secret influence that has elaborated the philosophy of all time.

It will scarcely be denied that there has ever been an intimate connection between man's desire for happiness and his thirst for truth. And when, as we have seen, St. Thomas draws together the activities of will and intellect in a tendency towards one identical end, truth, the desire for knowledge has for him a particular significance; it is eminently calculated clearly to reveal wherein resides that perfect beatitude in search of which we are.

But it is just characteristic of the desire of knowledge that it is endless. The metaphor of the Alpine climber who

Begins to think on rest his journey spent,
Till morning some tall mountain he doth find
More heights before him than he left behind

has passed into common speech to express the never-tiring zest that must urge on the seeker after knowledge. For out beyond the last pinnacle of knowledge there lies the horizon

1.—Ia., Q. XXVI, art. 2. Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 5.

of the Infinite Itself. As in a flash, the desire of knowledge bounds to its final term: the Cause of all.¹ Before St. Thomas, his master, Albertus Magnus, had come to a similar conclusion.²

It is a theme to which the saint frequently reverts. It underlies for him the whole mission of philosophy as a search for ultimates.³ We are familiar with the progress of knowledge viewed as a discovery of causes. When we have explained an eclipse, says St. Thomas, as the interception of the sun's light by the passage of the moon across it, our curiosity may be for the moment sated in regard to the eclipse, but immediately we surprise ourselves in a further inquiry about the moon. Why its movement? And if we envisage the whole universe as an effect of a first cause, are we not impelled further in our inquiry? Do we not desire to know this Being who is cause of all?⁴

Cajetan, however, would insist on a distinction here. "I should say," he writes, "that it is God as first cause that is so desired, and not God as He is in Himself."⁵ And even Sylvester Ferrariensis, who rejects Cajetan's general interpretation of St. Thomas' view of the natural desire of the vision of God,⁶ admits this distinction. For him the desire of God's vision envisages God under that precise formality of first cause of creation.⁷ It is indeed remarkable that those most in favour of the desire of God, as characteristic

1.—Si igitur intellectus humanus cognoscens essentiam alicujus effectus creati non cognoscat de Deo nisi an est, nondum perfectio ejus attingit simpliciter ad causam primam, sed remanet ei adhuc naturale desiderium inquirendi causam.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 8. Cf. Q. XII, art. 12. C.G., lib. III, cap. L.

2.—Cum omnes homines natura scire desiderant, et illud desiderium naturale stet in fine, et ratione, et causa omnium intellectum et intelligibilem; pro certo stabit desiderium in scientia intellectus primae substantiae; et propter hoc adipiscendum desiderat scire omnia alia, et quando pervenitur ad ipsum, stat, et habet finem felicitatis contemplativae.—*Metaph.*, lib. XXI, c. XXXV.

3.—C.G., lib. III, cap. L.

4.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 8.

5.—Dicam enim quod Deus in quantum causa rerum videri desideratur et non secundum substantiam suam in se.—Cajetan, *Comm.*, in Ia., Q. XII, art. 1.

6.—*Comm.*, in C.G., lib. III, cap. LI.

7.—Et sic naturaliter desideramus visionem Dei in quantum est visio primae causae, non autem in quantum est summum bonum.—*Loc. cit.*

of the human mind, arrest the train of reasoning here.¹

We say remarkable, for very slight acquaintance with the writings of Aquinas suffices to show that he does not confine himself merely to arguing from cause to effect in an exclusive manner. He has quite a series of arguments that he employs indifferently to bring home the one conclusion that it is the very substance and essence of God that is desired. And these arguments he puts forward indifferently, whether it is question of the human mind as such or of angelic intelligences.

The whole fiftieth chapter of the Third Book of his *Summa Contra Gentiles* is devoted to showing that "the natural knowledge which the separate substances have of God is not sufficient to appease their natural desire."² We may briefly summarise his arguments.

He appeals to the tendency towards the perfect. In any particular line of being there is the desire for perfection; the imperfect tends naturally to perfection. But that knowledge which the angels would have of God, while not knowing His Substance, would be imperfect in the order of knowledge. "For we do not estimate ourselves to know very much," he says, "as long as the essence of things is veiled from our eyes."³ "Not only is their desire not appeased," he adds, "but rather is all the more excited by that natural knowledge of God which they possess. For this very knowledge serves but to render them all the more conscious of their ignorance of the supereminent essence of God as He is in Himself. The desire to dispel this ignorance is equal to their desire of knowledge, and it is all the greater as a progress in knowledge serves but to emphasise its infinite profundity."⁴

The truth is that St. Thomas had inherited the high ideal of science and knowledge as dreamed of by Aristotle. Not

1.—As for instance P. Pègues, O.P., in his *Commentaire littéral sur la somme théologique*, vol. VIII, p. 168.

2.—C.G., lib. III, cap. L.—*Quod in naturali cognitione quam habent substantiæ separatae de Deo, non quiescit eorum desiderium.*

3.—Ex hac igitur cognitione quam habent substantiæ separatae de Deo, non quiescit naturale desiderium, sed incitatur magis ad divinam substantiam videndam.—*Loc. cit.*

4.—*Loc. cit.*

only has he considered science as essentially an investigation of causes, but he considered that of itself it pointed, on last analysis, to definition as the goal. The human mind cannot rest content with the mere factual knowledge *that* a thing is, it seeks to know *what* it is.

In this way St. Thomas is led ultimately to coordinate the twofold object of the human intelligence.¹ For if the essence of material things is its proper object, its adequate object is being. In God being and essence are identical, and the persistent effort of human intelligence to enter into the core of reality and read its secret is calculated to let us surmise its attitude when it is question of God.²

But an objection arises. "Not suspecting what God may be in Himself," says P. Pègues, "we cannot possibly desire to know Him as He is in Himself."³ "That," he adds, "is quite evident." We are not convinced, however. For it seems that the writer's conclusion turns on an inadmissible assumption, the supposition that there can be question only of an elective and explicit desire. That such a desire could not be directed towards what is absolutely unknown is evident enough. But why turn from the metaphysical analysis of knowledge, which St. Thomas is giving, to the question of an elective desire. As has already been pointed out, a certain ambiguity surrounds this terminology of elicited and innate acts of desire. The desire of seeing God, as act, is necessarily an elicited one, for the simple reason that from the view-point of act nothing else is to be found in the will. But *elicited* is not to be confounded with *explicit*. Elicited acts of the will may well be implicit.

It is clear there is not *necessarily* question of a desire that would at once be elective and explicit. On the contrary, he is investigating the purport of the natural desire of knowledge. His analysis is a metaphysical one that delves deeper than the mere surface of consciousness. When St. Thomas says

1.—Cf. *Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIV.

2.—Cf. P. Hugueny, O.P., A quel bonheur sommes-nous destinés ?—*Revue thomiste*, XIII (1905), p. 40-41.

3.—*Op. cit.*, p. 168.

“that there is a natural desire to seek out the causes of things” he is not troubled by the fact that quite a number of people are apparently indifferent to such an impulse of their nature, and when he sees at the source of all philosophy this same instinctive search for truth, he does not feel obliged to think that the human race is necessarily composed of philosophers who devote their entire energies to the search for the first cause. And yet, he insists, all desire to know the Being who is the Cause of all, and who remains the great secret in His own universe.¹ Even those who have neither the time nor taste to embark on such a research desire to know God. And *a pari* those who do not know either of the existence of such a vision as that of the divine essence, or of its possibility, may be said to desire it, for such a desire is implied in the very tendency of knowledge as such. St. Thomas does not presuppose the possibility of this vision as known. Rather, he wishes precisely to prove such a possibility. The vision of God is not desired because it is known to be possible, but it is possible because it is desired.

The dynamic aspect of knowledge reveals itself as knowledge grows. It appears in the active research for the ultimates of being, but it does not follow that it is fully expressed, or that it needs to be at all times or in every individual. “The idea of being,” says St. Thomas, “is proper to man; as an effect, it is proper to God, and there is in man a natural desire to seek out its cause.” St. Thomas was not over optimistic as to humanity’s vocation to these heights of abstraction, but for all that, he did not cease to speak of man’s “natural desire” to investigate being and its necessary conditions.

In the saint’s mind there was further the metaphysical principle that governs the return of being to God. As for will, he employs it to show that nothing finite can arrest the march of mind. It is possible to know God in many ways, but there is only one, the contemplation of His essence, which can procure perfect beatitude.

1.—C.G., lib. III, c. XXV.

There is a certain knowledge of God, more or less implicit, which is common to all ; beatitude cannot consist in that.¹ Nor can it be found in the strictly scientific knowledge of Him that is obtained by means of demonstration.² Nor yet, again, is the light that faith imparts of itself sufficient.³

In one word, no matter what knowledge of God we acquire by means of the finite, there is still room for progress and, hence, the urge of natural tendency is not finally arrested ; there is room for further questions.⁴ The essence of God could never be fully revealed by finite things. And to say that we merely desire to see Him precisely as First Cause is to ignore the fact that the greater knowledge we have of Him, unless we possess Him in vision, merely whets our desire to know more. St. Thomas speaks somewhere of the lack of subtlety in certain authors who held that we shall see God in some of His attributes without beholding His essence.⁵ Against those who insist on the distinction between desiring to see God as cause of creation and not as He is in Himself, may not a similar objection be urged ?

But, it will be said, there is a certain unnoticed ambiguity at the root of the whole matter. For how can there be passage of reason from known to unknown ? The essence of God is that which naturally is both unknown and unknowable. How then can there be a logical passage from Him as known by means of experience to the unknown of Him ? “A *de facto* knowledge,” writes P. Sertillanges, “is useless here, for

1.—*Felicitas humana non consistit in cognitione Dei quae communiter habetur a multis.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. XXXVIII.

2.—*Talis autem cognitio, per viam demonstrationis de Deo habita, remanet adhuc in potentia ad aliquid ulterius de Deo cognoscendum, vel eadem nobiliori modo.*—*Ibid.*, cap. XXXIX.

3.—*Ibid.*, cap. XL.

4.—*Nihil finitum desiderium intellectus quietare potest : quod exinde ostenditur, quod intellectus quolibet finito dato, aliquid ultra molitur apprehendere.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. L. Cf. Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 7 ; C.G., lib. III, cap. XLIV.

5.—*Fuere nonnulli qui Deum dicerent etiam in illa regione beatitudinis in claritate sua conspici, sed in natura minime videri : quos nimirum minor inquisitionis subtilitas fefellit. Neque enim illi simplici et incommutabili essentiae aliud est claritas, aliud est natura ; sed ipsa in natura claritas, ipsa claritas natura est ; et ita essentia Dei videbitur a beatis.*—*Quodlibet.*, X, art. 17.

a logical passage is founded on a right, and such a passage can be established solely from known to known.”¹ When St. Thomas infers that perfect beatitude is desired by intelligence, he is speaking of intelligence *as such*. And all his reasonings are knowingly based on this “equivocation,” which corresponds to passing unnoticed from the consideration of intelligence as such to intelligence as it is found in man. Knowing that the vision of God is promised *de facto* he seeks merely to find in intelligence certain aptitudes, and it is we who deceive ourselves in applying to the human mind what derives exclusively from intelligence as such.² The human mind has its own particular exigencies, but intelligence as such has exigencies that the infinite alone can satisfy.

Accordingly, for this eminent Thomist the process by which St. Thomas demonstrates the natural tendency of the human mind towards God’s vision is one that is based both on a supposition and on certain “equivocation” in his use of intelligence. Once granted that man ought attain to the perfect development of his intellectual being, it would not be impossible to show that such an ultimate realisation can be brought about only by the vision of God. But it is clear enough that this proves nothing as regards the *fact*, seeing that man *de facto* is not an intelligence as such, but an intelligence characterised by conditions which confine it to the sensible as to its proper object, and that, therefore, man, according to his real nature, can pretend to nothing beyond that which may be abstracted from sensible things.³

Now, if St. Thomas were knowingly basing his reasoning on this “equivocation,” mentioned by P. Sertillanges, we should at least expect a warning from the Saint that his reasoning was so deeply vitiated. On the contrary, when he does advert to this possible objection, which his modern interpreter so emphasises, he not only does not withdraw his claims for the human mind, but rather insists on them, and evades the objection by another consideration which in this

1.—A. D. Sertillanges, *S. Thomas d’Aquin*, t. II, p. 304.

2.—*Op. cit.*, p. 305.

3.—*Loc. cit.*

matter is fundamental. Had he the solution proposed by P. Sertillanges in mind he surely would have distinguished not only human intelligence as human and as intelligence, but also the object that would render it perfect as human as well as intelligence. But nowhere does St. Thomas make such a distinction. For all intelligences, whatever be their rank in the hierarchy of perfection, there is but one perfect beatitude. The only distinction possible is that one we have so emphasised in a previous chapter, which concerns the mode of attaining this beatitude. For that intelligence which is identical with being, which is perfection itself, beatitude consists in its essential presence to itself; for all other intelligences, of whatever rank, beatitude is the one unique and final end.¹

It is alien to the Thomistic spirit in metaphysic, we should think, to base any reasoning on an "equivocation," for the simple reason that the equivocal as such has no place in being. And the notion of intelligence as such is, like being, analogical. We cannot rest satisfied with the absolute opposition of intelligence as intelligence and as human intelligence. It seems to us that there ought to be a way of finding a more intelligible union of man as man and as intelligence. If as man there is a specific and natural exigency, as intelligence there are certain divine prerogatives (we are speaking on the hypothesis of P. Sertillanges), what will give the intelligible union of this fundamental duality? Are we to rest satisfied, as the eminent author does, with such an unreduced antinomy? It is no solution, evidently, to cite the apparently antithetical texts of St. Thomas. It seems to us that the true way of regarding such texts is in the light of a problem to be solved and not of a solution proposed. They are frequently given as a solution. But we confess to

1.—Cum beatitudo dicat quamdam ultimam perfectionem, secundum quod diversae res beatitudinis capaces ad diversos gradus perfectionis pertingere possunt, *secundum hoc necesse est quod diversimode beatitudo dicatur*. Nam in Deo est beatitudo per essentiam. . . . In angelis autem beatitudo est ultima perfectio secundum aliquam operationem.—Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 2, ad 4. Cf. *Comp. Theol.*, caps. CVI, CIX; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 4; *Ibid.*, Q. V, art. 7; *Ibid.*, Q. XXVI, art. 2 and ad 3; Ia-IIae., Q. III, art. 2; C.G., lib. III, cap. C.

have found in them an excitant for curiosity rather than a sedative, and we are convinced that in the mind of St. Thomas there was not the mere factual union of the two aspects of intelligence, but an intelligible one. And, hence, we believe that there is a way out of the dilemma furnished by P. Sertillanges, a way that has already been traced by Aquinas himself.

(3.) INTELLECTUAL DYNAMISM.

It is not sufficient, however, to consider knowledge in its global aspect as an exploration of being; we need to go to its very source in the union of mind with reality. Expression, we have shown, is a law of being. In knowledge mind expresses reality, and nature finds in mind the truth confided to it by God. We have now to see that this very concourse of mind and nature is a happy one for mind. If mind expresses reality, we shall have to concede that in every act of knowledge mind also expresses itself. As a law of being expression must find its application to knowing subjects.

St. Thomas puts us in the way of this when he distinguishes in knowing beings a two-fold aspect; he considers them as beings, and he views them distinctly under their formality as knowers. Like all being the knower participates in the tendency towards its perfection. But there is this about beings endowed with intelligence which distinguishes them from all things else, that their perfection is of a particular kind; it appertains to the intentional order. Already constituted in their nature, it is just the prerogative of mind to enrich itself by the intentional possession of the forms or perfection of other beings.¹

Perfection for beings thus endowed must derive from the acquisition of their proper object, truth. And hence, it is that we so often meet the definition of truth as the "good of intellect" in the writings of St. Thomas. As the good is

1.—Cf. J. Maréchal, S.J., *Le dynamisme intellectuel*.—*Rev. néo-scol.*, XXIX (1927), pp. 137-165.

that towards which all things tend, as to their perfection, it follows that we must admit in the knowing subject a tendency towards truth. At the source of cognition there is what a crude empiricism could not allow, and that which an idealism of an absolute kind deforms. It is this, that in knowledge the knower is neither purely passive, nor purely active. Knowledge, that is human knowledge, presupposes the happy harmony of the two. If the human mind is in the beginning a *tabula rasa*, yet it is endowed with the *apriori* power of modifying itself under the influence from without. This *apriori* power works itself out in the "back-stroke" of reaction, but first it must be given the object, intelligible potentially, before it can give it the consistency of the intelligible in act, and thereby distinguish the object from mere appearance.

"It would be an error," says St. Thomas, "to see in knowledge as such merely the union of mind and reality, and the assimilation of intelligence to the real." "Rather," he says, "knowledge is to be regarded as the result of this union."¹ Knowledge taken formally as knowledge, that is, as the consciousness of truth in which there is a necessary, though elementary, reflection of mind on its act,² presupposes the assimilation of mind to reality. From this union intellection arises as something *quasi* distinct from both.³ Knowledge is the effect, where the assimilation of mind to reality is the cause of knowledge.⁴ Knowledge is precisely the consciousness of this relation of truth that is lived by mind in its contact with reality. The immanence of

1.—Nam in actione quae transit in aliquid exterius, objectum, sive materia in quam transit actus, est separata ab agente . . . Sed in actione quae manet in agente (that of knowledge), *oportet, ad hoc quod procedat actio, quod objectum uniatur agenti*.—Ia., Q. LVI, art. 1. Cf. *Ibid.*, Q. LVI, art. 1; Q. XIV, art. 2.

2.—Veritas in intellectu est sicut consequens actum intellectus et sicut cognita per intellectum. Consequitur namque intellectus operationem secundum quod iudicium intellectus est de re sicuti est; cognoscitur autem ab intellectu secundum quod intellectus reflectitur supra actum suum, non solum secundum quod cognoscit actum suum, sed secundum quod cognoscit proportionem ejus ad rem.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 9.

3.—Ia., Q. LXXXV, art. 2.

4.—Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 1; Ia., Q. XIV, art. 2, ad 1.

knowledge as act is, therefore, no barrier to the exteriorisation of knowing as knowing.

But the knower, as knower, is not essentially distinct from the subject in its ontological reality ; the vital configuration of the subject to thing known comes to consciousness in knowledge. And this configuration or sympathetic moment of cognition where mind becomes the other already marks a dynamic aspect in knowledge. For it marks a passage on the part of knowing subject from potency to act, and this movement, for movement is just such a transition, envelops reality in its progress from known to known according to the well known dictum : *quidquid recipitur recipitur admodum recipientis*. We realise it when we compare, as St. Thomas so often does, the process of knowledge at the different levels of intellectual perfection. In God it is clear there is perfect intuition : thought of thought. He possesses within Himself, in that immediate presence of Himself to Himself, all that is required for knowledge ; His knowledge is the pure flash, as it were, of perfect self-possession. The angel also has a certain metaphysical appreciation of his place in the hierarchy of being by his immediate presence to himself ; not sufficient, however, seeing that his essence does not equate with being, to have all that perfect knowledge possible, and, hence, the necessity for the infused species that St. Thomas attributes to them. But human intelligence is just that which is characterised by the absence of that total and saturating intuition of God, as well by the absence even of the less perfect presence to itself that characterises the angel ; it is, properly speaking in potency. All that it has of an innate character, in the view of Aquinas, is just itself with its specific nature. Whereas for God the object is given necessarily, and whereas for the angel there is a certain metaphysical knowledge by reason of its own essence, in man there is necessarily a transition from potency to act ; there is a certain dynamism.

It is in the judgement that we have knowledge, properly speaking.¹ For it is there that we find truth, not merely

1.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 9.

present as in the case of sense knowledge, but known and affirmed as present. It is there that mind commences to have something proper to itself which it relates to the real. For every judgement is accompanied by affirmation.¹ It is affirmation that gives truth and renders error possible. This vital expression of reality in the judgement supposes the carrying on of that dynamic process initiated in the assimilation of mind to thing known; the very formulae, *componendo et dividendo*, employed by scholastics to designate mind's process in judging, insinuates this. P. Roland-Gosselin, in a very instructive article on "Error," points out how precisely intelligence, made for truth, is led into error.² There is this analogy between truth and goodness that just as there is no absolute evil, so a knowledge that would be entirely erroneous would be impossible.³ For every judgement is an affirmation of being; it is to being that mind is directed in its pursuit of truth. It is just the very natural tendency to affirm, as P. Kremer points out, that leads mind not only to establish mere association of ideas, but it leads it to attach them to an object.⁴

This dynamic character of knowledge is even better marked when we view the different attitudes of mind that may precede an absolute affirmation. As St. Thomas points out, intelligence is determined only by two factors: by its own proper object, or by the influence of the will. Sometimes it is in doubt, and hesitates because either the reasons for or against are not sufficient to move it, or because the reasons for and against seem to be equivalent. At other times it leans to one side rather than to the other, though recognising that it is not compelled to do so by the evidence of the question at issue, and then it is said to entertain merely an opinion. Finally, it may totally adhere to a proposition, and this must derive either from its object or from will. When it is will that is the determining influence we have

1.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 3; Cf. *Metaph.*, lib. VI, lect. 4.

2.—La théorie thomiste de l'erreur.—*Mélanges thomistes*, 1923, pp. 253-274.

3.—IIa-IIae., Q. CLXXIII, art. 6.

4.—Cf. *Bulletin thomiste*, no. V (1924), p. 154.

faith, but it is characteristic of intelligence as intelligence to be determined on last analysis by the evidence, whether mediate or immediate, of its object.¹

So determined, intelligence is in possession of its proper object, truth. And St. Thomas expresses mind's acquisition synthetically in a well-known text: "Truth is to be had both in intellect and sense, but not in the same manner. It is in intellect as resulting from intellect's action and as known by intellect. It results from the action of intelligence, in so far as mind's judgement refers to the thing as it really is, and it is known by intellect in so far as intellect reflects on its own act, not merely in so far as it knows its act, but in so far as the nature of this act is known, which cannot in its turn be known, unless the nature of the active principle, intellect, is also known, whose nature precisely it is to be conformed to reality. And in this sense truth is said to be in the intellect."²

Obviously there is a reference here to the nature of intelligence which is characterised by its relation to the object. Different minds may attach a greater importance to one of the two aspects implied. Some will emphasise the restraining influence of the object, other will look rather to mind itself, and lay special emphasis on the necessity of knowing the nature of the active principle, intellect. In reality, the two view-points are not exclusive. St. Thomas has admirably united both when he adds "whose nature it is to be conformed to reality." Those who emphasise the influence of object do not deny the elementary reflection of mind on its own act.³ If it is intellect's nature so to be determined by the object, it is its *nature*, and nature, in the vocabulary of St. Thomas, designates the principle of operation, and has a tendency and finality all its own.⁴

1.—*De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 1; Cf. IIa-IIae., Q. II, art. 1; Ia-IIae., Q. CXII, art. 5; *De Malo.*, Q. XVI, art. 6.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. I, art. 9.

3.—L. Noël, La présence immédiate des choses.—*Rev. néo-scol.*, no. 13 (1927), p. 145.

4.—Ia., Q. LXXX, art. 1.

This elementary reflection of mind on its own act may be regarded as an inchoation of a greater immediacy to itself which mind desires. At the human stage of intellection the presence of the object is necessary for that return of mind on itself. It would be an error to see in this opposition of subject and object something characteristic of knowledge as such. For, as we have pointed out, knowledge is not so much this union of subject and object as the resultant consciousness of mind's act. Pure act would necessarily be fully present to itself in a perfect limpidity of thought to itself. Objecting to himself that all knowledge supposes this return of mind on itself, St. Thomas points out that such a *reditus in suam substantiam* could only mean a perfect subsistence in the case of God.¹ "The intelligible in act," he constantly repeats, "is intelligence in act," and an intelligence completely in act must necessarily be in complete possession of perfect knowledge.

The concomitant expression of mind and of reality could not be better propounded. The immanence of the object inserts itself, for man, in the expression of mind as the means by which it becomes conscious of itself. And thus we see reality enveloped in this dynamism of mind as well for its own expression as for that of mind. Intellect illumines the object with its own light, and in this vital act of mind we must recognise the inner tension that impels the soul to realise itself.

And hence, the soul may be said to seek the object that it may "gain itself." Every judgement as a partial gaining of itself, may be looked upon as a progress towards a fuller consciousness of itself. Man, on the dividing line of spiritual and material orders, a synthesis of matter and spirit, is precisely that being who is absent from himself so far as consciousness goes, though ontologically present to himself. This ontological presence, which P. Gardeil has so well elucidated,² does not give rise to an immediate knowledge

1.—Ia., Q. XIV, art. 2, ad 1.

2.—La perception expérimentale de l'âme par elle-même d'après Saint Thomas.—*Mélanges thomistes*, pp. 218-236.

of its substance by the soul. Only by successive actuations can the desire of the soul for that perfect immanence to itself be furthered.

Yet this perfect immanence of the soul, supposing it were realised, would not mark the final term of the soul's desire.¹ For the soul, as finite, is not unto itself its own end. And hence, its search for itself is essentially subordinated to the pursuit of what is for it its final end. It gains itself, the better to realise its true position in regard to its ultimate perfection.

For if we speak of this tendency of man as one of self-realisation, we need to realise in what man's ultimate self-realisation would consist. What in effect is the true self that man desires?

If we are to realise this, and grasp the real extension of this dynamism of intelligence which reveals itself in contact with reality, we must look to the final end, for all is in function of the ultimate end. Seeing that reality intervenes as a means for realising the potentialities of mind, and that mind in search of objects is not less in search of self, seeking its fullest expression, we must envisage particular objects on the background of what is for mind its only adequate object, being. And for this we have but to remark that in judgement, not only is there affirmation, but there is necessarily an affirmation of being.

Indeed this affirmation of being enters into the very life of mind. As it is impossible to refrain from affirming something, the moment we affirm, we affirm something that transcends the present moment. For being is that which is necessary. As with truth, in the very fact of denying it we affirm it all the more. And as truth signifies a certain accord with reality, with being, in affirming truth I affirm this ultimate accord of both, or if I deny truth I, nevertheless, affirm what I conceive to be this accord with the reality of things, which is truth.

1.—Cf. Rousselot, *Amour spirituel et synthèse apperceptive*.—*Rev. de philosophie* X, (1910), pp. 225-240; *L'être et l'esprit*.—*Ibid.*, pp. 561-574.

Being is just that which is independent of my individual thought. Whether I affirm or deny it, it is there, the ultimate norm. Being is not something that is posed by me ; it is something that imposes itself on me. And once I affirm, I affirm this absolute consistence of being with itself, and that is truth. In every judgement, therefore, there is an effort to grasp the relation of my individual thought to truth, and doing so to establish a consistent relation between the object and being. The judgement is at once an affirmation of being and an effort to associate the object with this absolute of being. Both elements are immanent in every judgement.

Now what is implied in this? Evidently a certain disjunction at the heart of every judgement on the one hand, and on the other a certain necessary dynamism. There is a disjunction because my affirmation in every judgement goes beyond the present act ; it affirms being and that ultimate identity with itself which is truth ; it affirms that experience is intelligible, ultimately intellected, and relatable to the absolute of being. Our affirmations are more ambitious than our knowledge, for in every judgement without pretence to grasp the full intelligibility of individual living and palpitating experience, yet we affirm that this experience is intelligible simply speaking, and that it is necessarily harmonised for some intelligence. Implicitly we affirm the Divine Intelligence for whom it is, and we do so without having of that Intelligence a proper concept.

There is a certain dynamism since the particular expression of itself that intelligence realises in the judgement is but a moment in its progress. The object enters within the reign of this fundamental dynamism of intelligence ; it is for it a means of realisation ; and, further, it is but a partial realisation of it in its tendency to transcend the present act. But where does this tendency face ? Have we not seen it in the very disjunction that is to be found in every judgement ? This discrepancy shows at once the extent of mind's ambition : its fundamental tendency towards being which is truth.

We have but to recall our analysis of the fundamental dynamism that characterises the finite in regard to God, as

well as the global aspect of man's desire for knowledge to realise that this tendency is an infinite one, and that its remote and ultimate term is none other than the intuition of truth itself. It is the disjunction between intelligence as a formal limitation of being and being as truth that sets up an incessant tendency. It is this distance between the degree of formal perfection and the maximum of act that marks the distance to be traversed. Act as such, and being, are but names for the illimited. So that intelligence finds itself dynamised by an aspiration to go beyond itself infinitely and, if left to itself, to relinquish the hope of ever fully realising all its capacity for perfection. For the distance to be traversed being infinite, it follows that the term of such tendency is in the strictest sense the *limit* of its tendency. It marks the asymptotic term towards which intelligence tends, and which left to itself it is incapable of attaining.

The contemplation of truth in immediate vision thus appears as the unattainable limit of mind's natural activity. The very intelligibility of desire and tendency supposes a term, the very meaning of movement supposes a distance to be traversed. And as the finite is just that which of itself must ever remain in potency, it is easy to see that while its tendency is prospective, pointing to that alone which could give it the full perfection of act, this very term is the asymptotic limit of its natural activity.

Hence the very tendency that is the soul of all affirmation is a tendency towards that integral truth which it affirms. And as it is the final end, as that which is desired for itself, renders intelligible the pursuit of proximate realisations, it is the desire of integral truth, that alone renders intelligible man's avidity for partial truths, as instalments of what alone can finally fully satisfy it.

This is the element of truth that is at the source of idealistic contentions, and of the absolutist view of truth as the whole. Feeling that intellect, by its very nature, is driven to the affirmation of the absolute unity of things, seeing the intransigence with which it affirms truth, unique and integral, but not distinguishing the human and divine, they set no bounds

to mind's fundamental effort to equate the real. Denying matter, the universe becomes an unfolding mind. To the idealist one event fully grasped becomes what the crystal is to the magician: "the ball that images the world." The universe is seen through and through in its immanent rationality.

For the Thomist, no less intransigent than he, where it is question of the value of intelligence, but distinguishing clearly an intelligence which is its own entire justification from intelligence as it appears in the finite, all that can be affirmed is that such a view-point from which all is in harmony must exist, but that from the human and natural view-point it is the unattainable limit, towards which finite mind necessarily tends. The very desire to know leads ultimately to a divine view-point. And because at the source of things there is an initial act of liberty on the part of that Being who is unto Himself His own perfection, it is clear that the desire to know the real, to know all there is or can be, is possible only if He chooses to reveal Himself to man's intelligence. And human intelligence desires to know all, and thus it is that only the desire of God's vision can give the last word once we undertake courageously to explain the rhythm of knowledge.

Whether we regard human intelligence as having for formal object the essence of material things, and mark its opposition to will as directed towards the beings of things, or whether we view it in regard to its adequate object, being, the same conclusion follows, with a drawing together of both will and intellect. For there is a certain transmutation, as it were, at least equivalently, of mind's formal and its adequate object, when it is question of God. For God is precisely the identity of essence and being; in Him what corresponds to mind's formal and adequate object is identical. And thus it is that the argument that it is mind's nature to scrutinise the very nature of thing receives a new value. For intellect to be directed towards the essence of material things is ultimately to be turned towards God whose essence is His existence, and will that tends to the being of things tends ultimately towards the divine essence which is the only true good as such. God

is the unique end towards which all things converge, and who realises, not only the unity of being, but of mind, in a particular and prospective manner, by being the ultimate attraction for intelligence and will. And hence it is that unerringly they point to Him as sole source of that ultimate beatitude for the rational nature from whence they spring.

CHAPTER V.

THE CONSEQUENCE.

“SINCE it is impossible,” wrote St. Thomas, “that a natural desire be vain, which would be the case were it impossible to arrive at the vision of God desired by all minds, it is necessary to say that it is possible for human and angelic intelligence to contemplate God’s essence.”¹ In this citation the general tenor of the Saint’s arguments is revealed. In virtue of his analysis of the fundamental dynamism of finite intelligence, he consistently infers that the vision of God is possible. “Were it objectively impossible,” he says, “we should be constrained to admit that a natural desire could be vain.” And viewed in the perspective of his metaphysics of being and of ultimate intelligibility, St. Thomas concluded that such a supposition was entirely absurd: *naturale desiderium non potest esse inane*.

(1.) THE UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE.

From the comparatively narrow view-point of terminology, it is not without a certain interest to mark the consistency with which the Saint formulated this important conclusion.² The historical context no doubt aided such a consistency. His aim was precisely to prove the possibility of man’s elevation to the supernatural. But independently of terminology and of historical circumstances, there were the deeper exigencies of his metaphysical outlook.

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LI.

2.—Quod omnia intellectus cujuscumque gradus particeps esse *potest* divinae visionis.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LVII. Utrum aliquis intellectus creatus *possit* Deum videre per essentiam.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 1. Cf. C.G., lib. III, caps. LI, LIII, LIV.

For St. Thomas, the object of metaphysical reflection was being as such and the necessary conditions of its final intelligibility. To speak of metaphysical exigencies, is to circumscribe the purport of our statement within the proper domain of metaphysical abstraction. To consider being is to envisage experience from one particular aspect ; it is to prescind from the factual aspect of things to consider them under a new light, that of their necessity. And this is tantamount to considering them as possible.

St. Thomas has, therefore, the right of claiming from his adversary that he remain within the universe of discourse. But as there will always be certain minds more at home in the concrete and on a lower level than that implied in the heights of metaphysical abstraction, it is but natural to expect that objections have arisen, which were possible precisely because the true object of metaphysical reflection was not properly grasped. Where St. Thomas had viewed the metaphysical expanse of possibility, not isolating the finite from the Infinite towards whom it tends, other minds have quickly descended into the narrow sphere of the relative and, with a certain unjustifiable empiricism, inferred that, because a desire of nature was natural, then it may not be vain ; it must either be satisfied, or at least nature must have within it the power of realising the end desired.

Now it is a fundamental error in metaphysics to isolate the finite and the Infinite, and it is false to infer on the one hand that if an end cannot be naturally acquired, then it is not naturally desired, and on the other, that if it is naturally desired that it must be naturally acquired. To infer in the present instance, that the desire of God's vision because natural, must inevitably be satisfied if it is not to be vain, is to place oneself in flagrant opposition to one of the fundamental positions of Thomistic philosophy : the distinction of nature and the supernatural.

St. Thomas never thus isolated the finite and its cause ; the deepest meaning of the finite he saw in its entire dependency on God. If we may take an extreme example to illustrate

his attitude we need but recall that phrase of his, "that what man does by the aid of grace is not to be designated as impossible for him."¹ He saw also that the very reasoning that would prevent the finite from envisaging an object beyond its natural powers, was just the potent means of rendering nugatory all human research, by preventing the human mind from attaining even the existence of God. The distinction of the final end as the objective term of man's tendency and as subjective possession of this end, was too clearly before the Saint's eyes for him to entertain any illusions on the metaphysical import of this tendency, of this natural desire. "When it is said," he writes, "that no nature can tend to what is beyond its natural powers, that must not be interpreted to mean that no nature can tend towards an *object* that is beyond its forces, since it is manifest that our intelligence can know certain things that are beyond it, as is clear in mind's natural knowledge of God."²

The clarity with which St. Thomas distinguishes the two orders, ought of itself be sufficient to preclude all possible objections on the score of a *de facto* realisation of natural desire as necessary to avoid its being in vain. As we have had occasion frequently to remark, the *fact* of man's elevation to the vision of God is entirely beyond reason and hence, *prima facie*, there ought not be the slightest question of proving, in virtue of his metaphysical adage, a factual realisation of a natural desire.

The reader may take any of the many texts that have been invoked in favour of this natural desire to realise the delicate way in which St. Thomas appeals to faith, on the one hand, where it is obviously question of factual destinies, and to reason, where it is question of the objective possibility of this vision desired. We select the following text as typical; nor is it the only one of its kind. "Since," he writes, "man's beatitude consists in the highest operation of his nature, if it is not *possible* for man to attain to the vision of God, then either of two alternatives imposes itself: either man will

1.—Ia-Iae., Q. CIX, art. 4, ad 2.

2.—Ia-IIae., Q. CIX, art. 3, ad 2.

never attain to perfect happiness, or his beatitude will consist in something other than God ; but these two alternatives are opposed to faith . . . *And also to reason.* For there is in man a natural desire of knowing the cause when the effect is known ; and out of this has sprung wonder. And so if it is not *possible* for the intelligence of the rational creature to attain to the First Cause, nature's desire will be in vain."¹

Moreover, we have seen, in what sense precisely the metaphysical exigencies of the tendency of finite intelligence required a final end. Was it not that the very tendency and progress itself be possible ? It was not that the infinitely distant final end be immediately possessed, but that the proximate ends be attainable in virtue of the attraction of the final end.

The efficaciousness of natural desire has not even a necessary connection with the actual realisation of the proximate end. Despite the natural tendency of will, as appetite of the rational nature, the fact that it is also a faculty of choice, and that liberty remains, as long as the divine vision itself has not been accorded, is sufficient to make us distrustful in any immediate inference as to the necessity of a natural desire being fulfilled that it may not be vain. " Though a thing may be deprived of its proximate end, it does not follow that it is entirely in vain, for the relation to the ultimate end remains ; and, therefore, though free will is destitute in particular instances of real goodness, to which naturally it is ordained, yet it is not in vain, for this very fact ultimately turns to the glory of God, which is the ultimate end, by manifesting His justice."²

Entailing no necessary realisation of the proximate end, the natural desire of God implies no inevitableness as to the creature's possession of the end. For, as we have just seen, the final end, as such, is always triumphant ; on last analysis all must cede to the glory of God. There is, therefore, no point in urging that a natural desire must be realised if it is

1.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 1.

2.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXIV, art. 10.

not to be vain. When the suicide in virtue of this very tendency to beatitude takes things into his own hands, are we to say that the desire of nature has been vain? When the demon sought within himself the final end, and condemned himself to be tormented by the very desire of God which is the deepest tendency of his nature, is this tendency vain in its metaphysical sense?

St. Thomas could scarcely have seen the necessity of refuting in detail such considerations, which are more or less impregnated with a certain myopic empiricism. Envisaging the finite as being and in the perspective of ultimate intelligibility, he was not likely to be troubled by the infra-metaphysical consideration that a natural desire should be necessarily satisfied. The intelligibility of such a desire could only have a metaphysical import. The only thing that is entirely "vain" in metaphysics is absolute contradiction, for that traces the absolute limit for mind as such, whether it be that of God or man.¹ And if we recall this, we shall easily concede, on the one hand, that a "vain" desire would be a contradiction in metaphysics, and, on the other, a desire which would be efficacious in the infra-metaphysical sense, has no interest for the metaphysician.

There is an interesting example, that may give us some idea, of how St. Thomas would have proceeded against the kind of objection that we are considering. It has to do with an objection against God's infinity. The example is not without a certain immediate relevancy. Speaking on the question of a natural desire of the divine vision, P. Gardeil writes to the effect that, "there is no example of a natural appetite which is not accompanied by the active means for its realisation. Hunger tends towards its aliment, the eye calls for light, but also they possess of themselves an organism of means which permits them to obtain these things. But we do not see that intellectual nature as such has at its disposition natural energies and means of grasping that which is proper to God in His Essence. . . . This desire, therefore, is not *a priori* efficacious: *a priori*, that is to say, in virtue

1.—Ia., Q. V, art. 2.

of the constitutive principles of nature. To the innate desire, we said, corresponds necessarily the efficacious power of realising it, the active power, disposing of appropriate natural means, or at the very least passive potency, requiring in nature an active correlative power which will realise it. Here nothing such as that is to be found, and all the inconveniences of the Scotist position, making the supernatural directly conjoint (*solidaire*) with nature."¹

We have already noticed the important distinction that is to be placed between St. Thomas and Scotus as to the meaning of natural desire. But, in so far as we ourselves have pretended, following St. Thomas, to have found in the intellectual nature as such, a tendency to God, it may not be without utility to consider for a moment P. Gardeil's observations in this connection. In the first place, his inductive consideration that to every passive potency there corresponds an active power of realisation seems not *apropos*. For if we feel inclined to indulge in inductions, then unless some necessary connection be revealed, let the induction be complete. And immediately we are forced to admit that the very case we are considering, that of intellectual nature as such, is obstinately irreducible. For what is to be said of the argument that to innate tendency must correspond the active faculty, in its own order, when it is just the nature of intelligence as such that its natural active power is positively incapable of fully reducing its passive capacity to act? We need only refer back to many passages in which we threw into relief the infinite capacity of intelligence.

Now, here is the point of the example we are going to cite. From the infinite capacity of intelligence St. Thomas inferred a certain immediate, we should say, a transcendental relation to God. One would imagine he was envisaging in the following reply the very objection his modern *confrère* has expressed. "The question arises whether God's power is infinite. And it would seem that it is not. For as is said in IX Metaphysics (text 2), there would be in nature a certain active power to which there would not correspond a passive

1.—Cf. *Op. cit.*, p. 278.

one. But to the infinite divine power nothing passive in nature corresponds." It is to be remarked that the difficulty proposed by St. Thomas is just the obverse of that indicated by P. Gardeil. For whereas it is objected that to the active potency of God nothing passive corresponds in creation, the interest for us here derives from this that to the passive potency of the rational nature there would be no active power corresponding in nature.

To this objection St. Thomas gives a two-fold reply. On the one hand, "that there is nothing in God which can be said to be in vain," which is evident, but has less significance for us here. His second reply is that which is really significant, for it points to the necessity of seeing things in the true perspective. "We may say," he writes, "that the philosopher speaks of a *natural active potency*. Natural things are coordinated one to the other, and even all creatures; but God is outside this order. He it is to whom the whole is ordained, as to an extrinsic good."¹ Now in virtue of its very nature, intelligence has a transcendental relation to God, the extrinsic good, as St. Thomas calls Him, and, therefore, it is not to be judged according to the exigencies of natural things in their mere correlation among themselves.

This is sufficient to vindicate for the natural desire of intellectual nature the right to its being considered from the purely metaphysical point of view, and exclude any empirical or narrow conclusion as to its necessary satisfaction.

A possible objection, however, arises out of the Saint's application of the same principle, *desiderium naturale non potest esse inane*, in his proof of the immortality of the soul.² Just as he infers here that the soul must actually remain in being, it will be said, so he should have reasoned to the actual realisation of the soul's natural desire of the beatific vision.

1.—Nihil quod est in Deo potest dici frustra : qui frustra est quod est ad aliquem finem quem non potest attingere ; Deus autem, et ea quae in ipso sunt, non sunt ad finem, sed sunt finis. Vel dicendum quod Philosophus loquitur de potentia activa naturali. Res enim naturales coordinatae sunt ad invicem, et etiam omnes creaturae. Deus autem est extra hunc ordinem ; ipse enim est ad quem totus hic ordo ordinatur sicut ad bonum extrinsecum.—*De Pot.*, Q. I, art. 2, ad 1.

2.—C.G., lib. II, cap. LV ; *Ibid.*, cap. LXXIX ; Ia., Q. LXXV, art. 6.

The reply to this objection is not difficult. For there is a marked absence of parity in the two cases. On the one hand, the immortality of the soul belongs to the natural order as such, whereas the vision of God is simply the supernatural. Immortality supposes the natural concurrence of God with creation ; it does not suppose a new act of condescension on the part of God ; it does not as such demand a participation in the intimate life of God Himself. As it is, it tends to remain in being, otherwise it would be reduced to immediate contradiction with itself. St. Thomas attaches man's desire for immortality to the metaphysical tendency of all being to remain in being. On the other hand the desire of God's vision prescind from the *fact* of such a destiny, and further where the actual realisation of such a desire is concerned, it supposes a free act on the part of God.

Once we so distinguish the different imports of the natural desire, we are in a position to see that the objection from immortality far from being a difficulty is rather a help, for at least it supposes on the part of those who would urge such an objection an admission of the metaphysical value of the Saint's argument from the concept of natural desire, and naturally leads them, once proper precision is guaranteed, to admit the probative force of his argument in the case of the desire of God's vision. In both cases St. Thomas appeals to a metaphysical concept of nature. A nature, like that of man, endowed with a natural tendency towards the vision of God, it is impossible that such a nature should tend towards something *in se* contradictory, merest nothingness. The term towards which the rational nature tends must have a positive consistency, otherwise we should have to admit a tendency of nature to the impossible. But the very metaphysical concept of movement or tendency excludes such a supposition. If there is tendency there must be some trend towards which it is directed ; if there is movement it must face in some direction ; it is absurd that there be a movement that faces nowhere.

(2.) THE PROOF OF GOD BY DESIRE.

In recent years quite a literature has grown up around the proof of God drawn from man's desire of beatitude.¹ While we admit with P. Garrigou-Lagrange that such a proof may be easily reduced to the *Quarta Via* of St. Thomas, we see no reason why the latter writer demands so imperatively a distinction between the tendency of nature, which he designates as natural and efficacious, and a tendency which he designates as elicit and deliberate.² As we have shown, the infinite tendency of the rational nature as such supposes for its intelligibility a final end, and this in its turn arises from the metaphysical principle that God alone is to Himself His own beatitude. So that ultimately the tendency to God is reducible to this that in God, His Essence and His Existence being identical, He is to Himself His own end. Outside of Him the finite merely participates in being, tends necessarily beyond itself to Him. The finite as participated being has not within itself the *raison d'être* of its existence, either from the view-point of efficiency or of finality, and hence, for the intelligibility of its tendencies it is essential that God as Final End exist. There is a significant text of Aquinas in this respect, which, so far as we are aware, has not been sufficiently noticed, if at all, in the controversies on this question of the proof of His Existence by the desire of beatitude. It is the following: "Our intellect in its operation has an infinite extension which may be seen from the fact that given any finite quantity our intelligence can excogitate something greater. This infinite orientation of intelligence, however, would be vain, were there not some infinite intelligible reality :

1.—Cf. M. D. Roland-Gosselin, *Le désir du bonheur et l'existence de Dieu.*—*Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XIII (1914), pp. 162-172.

2.—*Dieu, son existence et sa nature*, 4 e éd., Paris, p. 306.

hence there must be something which is infinite and intelligible, something absolutely true, and that is God."¹

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that, whatever may be the superficial resemblance to be remarked between this text and the celebrated argument of St. Anselm, yet there is a great and essential difference. St. Anselm wished to argue immediately from the concept of the greatest being possible to the existence of God. Now while it is customary to argue against St. Anselm that his proof implies a passage from the ideal to the real order, it would be much more *apropos*, it seems to us, to question his very premise, his very supposition that the human mind has a positive idea of such a being. If God is possible He exists, but have we immediately the knowledge, as St. Anselm seems to suppose, of the positive possibility of such a being?

On the other hand, the procedure of St. Thomas is seen to be indirect. He does not vindicate for mind the positive idea of such a being. Rather he takes the tendency, that the infinite capacity of intelligence supposes, to infer a positive consistency for that towards which it tends. But if we are to appreciate the full significance and strength of his position we have to view intelligence in relation to will as the tendency of the rational nature. For, as we have insisted, the ultimate relation of knowledge to will is not something accessory or accidental. St. Thomas deduces will from its relation to intelligence. There is an absolute metaphysical relation to intelligence. There is an absolutely metaphysical connection between the two faculties. He puts it in an unanswerable way in the following text: "The will has regard only to a known good; hence that which does not fall under intelligence cannot have any significance for will. But these things that are impossible *secundum se* do not come within the domain of intelligence, since they are internally repugnant, hence, neither for the tendency of the

1.—Intellectus noster ad infinitum in intelligendo extenditur, cujus signum est quod qualibet quantitate finita data intellectus noster majorem excogitare possit. Frustra autem esset haec ordinatio intellectus in infinitum nisi esset aliqua res intelligibilis infinita, oportet igitur esse aliquam rem intelligibilem infinitam, quam oportet esse maxime veram, et hanc dicimus Deum.—C.G., lib. I, cap. XLIII.

will.”¹ In a word the tendency of the intellectual nature as such cannot tend towards that which has not in itself the consistency of intelligibility; it cannot tend towards the impossible. And for St. Thomas that is rightly tantamount to saying that God exists.

Possibility may be regarded from a twofold view-point. Negatively, it would be that which has not been proved impossible. Positively, it is that which is seen to have a positive consistency of its own, that which is seen not to imply a contradiction. It is interesting to mark how St. Thomas reduces possibility to the fundamental principle of identity, being is being. “For we may consider possibility,” he says, “without any immediate reference to a principle of realisation, but in itself simply as that which is not impossible in regard to being, for the impossible is just that which necessarily is not, that is, is in necessary opposition to the very notion of being. This impossibility arising out of the absence of coherency of its terms implies an opposition of some kind, and in all opposition affirmation and negation are included.” “Accordingly,” he says, “in such an opposition it is implied that there can be an affirmation and a negation at one and the same time, which is essentially beyond the powers of any agent. The simultaneous presence of affirmation and negation cannot as such have any *raison d’être*; it cannot imply being, because non-being removes being, nor non-being, because being excludes non-being. And hence, we are ultimately reduced to the fundamental affirmation of being, and outside of being there is but the unthinkable, the impossible.”²

1.—C.G., lib. I, cap. LXXXIV.

2.—Possibile et impossibile dicuntur tripliciter. Uno modo secundum aliquam potentiam activam vel passivam . . . Alio modo non secundum aliquam potentiam, sed secundum seipsum, sicut dicimus possibile quod non est impossibile esse, et impossibile dicimus quod necesse est non esse. . . . Sciendum est ergo quod impossibile quod dicitur secundum nullam potentiam, sed secundum seipsum, dicitur ratione discohaerentiae terminorum. Omnis autem discohaerentia terminorum est in ratione alicujus oppositionis; in omni autem oppositione includitur affirmatio et negatio, ut probatur *X Metaph.* (text com. 15); unde in omni tali impossibili implicatur affirmationem et negationem esse simul. Hoc autem nulli activae potentiae attribui potest . . . Hoc autem quod est affirmationem et negationem esse simul, rationem entis habere non potest, nec etiam non entis, quia esse tollit non esse et non esse tollit esse.—*De Pot.*, Q. I, art. 3. Cf. *Ia.*, Q. XXV, arts. 2, 3, 4; Q. I, art. 3.

Now St. Thomas pretends to show that the vision of God implies no inherent contradiction. Since it is impossible to contemplate the Essence of God, or to know Him as He really is, by means of any intelligible species derived from created things, it can only be by means of the Divine Essence itself that such a contemplation is possible. The Divine Essence in this contemplation will be not only the object seen, but the very means by which it is contemplated.¹

Further, seeing that the absolute perfection of intelligence consists in the contemplation of truth, of pure act, why could not God, who is pure form in the intelligible line, truth itself, not immediately perfect intelligence, naturally made for truth? The very potential infinity of mind forbids its complete actualisation by any finite agent; it is naturally open for a perfection that can come from God alone. And God is not outside its range in the same way that the formal object of one sense-faculty is outside that of another. By its transcendental relation to being mind has a certain "immediacy" where God is concerned. Analogically He is attained in its own adequate object, being.

God is the First Intelligible; in Himself He is the Absolute Perfection of Intelligibility; He is Pure Form. This absolute perfection gives Him an immediate empire over all being, and particularly over the intellectual creation with which He concurs so intimately. As we move away from matter we are in presence of greater intelligibility and of greater expansiveness. St. Thomas employs an example to

1.—*Modus autem hujus visionis satis jam ex dictis, qualis esse debeat, apparet. Ostendum enim est supra quod divina substantia non potest videri in aliqua specie creata. Unde oportet, si Dei essentia videatur, quod per ipsamet essentiam divinam intellectus ipsam videat, ut sic in tali visione divina essentia sit et quod videtur et quo videtur.*—C.G., lib. III, cap. LI. Manifestum est autem quod Deus et est auctor intellectivae virtutis, et ab intellectu videri potest. Et cum ipsa intellectiva virtus creaturae non sit Dei essentia, relinquitur quod sit aliqua participativa similitudo ipsius, qui est primus intellectus. . . . Requiritur ergo ad videndum Deum aliqua Dei similitudo, ex parte visivae potentiae, qua scilicet intellectus sit efficax ad videndum Deum. Sed ex parte rei visae, quam necesse est aliquo modo uniri videnti, per nullam similitudinem creatam Dei essentia videri potest. . . . dicere Deum per similitudinem videri, est dicere divinam essentiam non videri, quod est erroneum. Dicendum ergo quod ad videndum Dei essentiam requiritur aliqua similitudo ex parte visivae potentiae; scilicet lumen divinae gloriae confortans intellectum ad videndum Deum.—Ia., Q. XII, art. 2.

illustrate.¹ "That which is composed of matter and form cannot be immediately the form of another, because matter essentially limits it. What subsists as a form may become the form of another, provided its existence is such as to allow its being participated by another, as is the case of soul and body. But if its existence is not so capable of being participated it cannot become the form of another because determined by its own subsistence to itself. The same may be said of the intelligible. Since truth is the perfection of intellect, that intelligible alone will be pure form in the order of intelligibility which is truth itself. Truth is but being as knowable, and hence, only that being is truth as such whose essence is being as such. And that applies to God alone. The other "subsisting-intelligibles" are not, therefore, pure forms in the order of intelligibility, but imply, as it were, the reception of a form in a subject; they are true, but not truth itself, they are beings, but not being as such. Accordingly, it is possible to conceive of the Divine Essence as the intelligible form by which the created intellect contemplates it, whereas this would not be true of any other created intelligible."

In this way a difficulty is avoided. God could not enter into composition with another from view-point of mere natural existence, in the sense of uniting with another to form one nature. That is evidently impossible, because of the perfection of the Divine Nature already in itself. But the intelligible union that takes place in knowledge is not a natural one; intellect already perfect in its nature takes on a new perfection of the intelligible order. And hence, the union of God with the finite intelligence does not imply that opposition, that His union to constitute with the finite one nature evidently entails.

It follows that a twofold conclusion is possible, one negative, the other positive. Speaking negatively the union of God with the finite intelligence, where His Essence plays the rôle of the *species intelligibilis* in ordinary natural knowledge,

1.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LI.

is not seen to imply a contradiction. And, positively, in virtue of the tendencies of the rational creature which finds its perfection only in an immediate union with truth itself, this vision is seen to be possible *in se*, unless we admit that such fundamental tendencies are directed towards the impossible, which alone affords no self-consistency, and which alone is radically opposed to being. Such a possibility, where the human mind is concerned, is necessarily only *remote*. Envisaging possibility in itself objectively, there was no immediate reference to the active power capable of realising such a possibility. Yet, once we reflect on what such a possibility implies, it is clear that it supposes the existence of causes capable of realising it. It appeals on the one hand to the active power of God, but in the creature it supposes merely the passive potency, the obediential capacity in virtue of which it is capable of being elevated by God, and that tendency of its being towards God.

This tendency, as we have seen, does not of itself claim realisation as its right; the beatitude that is sought is twofold, one which is sought for itself, the other as a participation. But that which is sought for itself is not something to which the finite has a right in the sense of a right of possession; *non est naturae*, said St. Thomas, *sed finis naturae*.

Moreover, it is necessary to distinguish this tendency of the rational creature from that of the lower orders. Whatever may be implied as regards the realisation of the tendency of material beings, or of those unendowed with intelligence, the tendency of rational being has two very distinguishing characteristics. On the one hand, it tends to something beyond its natural powers, and this instead of being an imperfection, is rather a privilege that springs from its nobility. On the other, where the tendency of lower beings tends inevitably towards its realisation, unless some obstacle intervenes, man has the unhappy privilege of employing his freedom, again a perfection, to thwart the

deepest instinct of his being.¹ It follows that the tendency of the will is, as it were, doubly inefficacious. Even when will is in accord with its own natural tendency it is incapable of embracing by its own natural grasp the Infinite in act ; and obviously, when it is no longer in accord with itself, as when it seeks as final something outside of God, it is doubly inefficacious as regards true beatitude.

As beatitude is not the creature's by right of nature, it can be obtained only by activity. But, as we have seen, the creature's activity as such is quite incapable of realising this ultimate end, and hence, St. Thomas distinguishes a twofold activity, that which really is efficacious and capable of realising its end, where it is question of an end not beyond the natural forces of the finite, and another whereby the creature may merit the end, and may expect to receive it as a gift from God.² But as it is the rôle of merit to attain something beyond the natural powers of the creature, it is clear that merit itself already supposes the divine aid ; "without grace," says St. Thomas, "it is impossible to merit." For it is just the rôle of grace to lift us out of the natural plane, as it were, and to render the natural tendency to God which, left to itself, would be necessarily asymptotic, an efficacious striving towards the divine vision. Just as our natural forces are incapable of contemplating God as He is in Himself, so our natural tendencies are not of themselves sufficiently elevated to put us on the plane of a life which is

1.—*Electio enim est eorum quae sunt ad finem, non autem ultimi finis. Sicut igitur non repugnat libero arbitrio quod immobili voluntate desideramus beatitudinem, et miseriam fugimus in communi ; ita non erit contrarium libero arbitrio quod voluntas immobiliter fertur in aliquid determinatum sicut in ultimum finem : quia sicut nunc immobiliter nobis inhaeret natura communis, per quam beatitudinem appetimus in communi ita etiam immobiliter manebit illa specialis dispositio per quam hoc vel illud desideratur ut ultimus finis.*—C.G., lib. IV, cap. XCV.

2.—*Quaelibet autem res ad ultimum finem per suam operationem pertingit. Quae quidem operatio in finem ducens, vel est factiva finis, quando finis non excedit virtutem ejus quod operatur propter finem, sicut medicatio est factiva sanitatis ; vel est meritoria finis quando finis excedit virtutem operantis propter finem, unde expectatur finis ex dono alterius. Beatitudo autem ultima excedit et naturam angelicam et humanam. Unde relinquitur quod tam homo quam angelus suam beatitudinem meruerint . . . Actus non potest esse meritorius secundum quod est ex libero arbitrio, nisi in quantum est gratia informatus.*—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 4 ; *Ibid.*, Q. IX, art. 9, ad 1.

divine. For grace is the germ of glory¹; faith is a commencement, in no merely metaphorical sense, of vision. Without grace there is no immediate proportion² between man's faculties and the object which alone is capable of putting them in possession of their ultimate beatitude.

On the one hand, God does not wish to force this eternal beatitude on the creature, and, hence, He has left it to the creature to achieve within himself the unity of his being, the harmony of his tendencies and his free choice. On the other, He does not grant the vision of Himself as a recompense for natural merit, and, hence, in this very choice of man there is the divine cooperation on the supernatural plane which imparts to man the supernatural vigour of an efficacious tendency. But, as on last analysis it is God who moves the creature, both to its natural and supernatural destinies, it is for Him to fix the precise degree of glory which the creature may merit.³ "It is necessary," says St. Thomas, "that the motion of the creature be towards something determinate, for it is impossible to have a *processus ad infinitum*."

It is interesting to mark the difference there is between the inefficacious natural tendency of the creature to God, and that tendency which is rendered possible by grace. On the one hand, we have seen that the divine vision as such was sufficient to mark the term towards which the tendency of the finite points for its intelligibility. But once it is question of an efficacious tendency towards this vision, the vision as such is no longer sufficient to determine the activity

1.—Ia-Iae., Q. CXIV, art. 1, ad 1; Q. LXII, art. 3, ad 3.

2.—Quia vero ultimus finis creaturae rationalis facultatem naturae ipsius excedit; ea vero quae sunt ad finem debent esse fini proportionata secundum rectum providentiae ordinem; consequens est ut creaturae rationalis etiam adjutoria divinitus conferantur, non solum quae sunt proportionata naturae, sed etiam quae facultatem naturae excedunt. Unde supra naturalem facultatem rationalis imponetur homini divinitus lumen gratiae per quod interius perfecitur ad virtutem et quantum ad cognitionem dum elevatur mens hominis per lumen hujusmodi ad cognoscendum ea quae rationem excedunt, et quantum ad actionem et affectionem, dum per lumen hujusmodi affectus hominis supra creata omnia elevatur ad Deum diligendum et sperandum in Ipso, et ad agendum ea quae talis amor requirit.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CXLIII.

3.—Respondeo dicendum quod, in unoquoque motu motoris intentio fertur in aliquid determinatum, ad quod intendit perducere mobile. Intentio enim est de fine, cui repugnat processus in infinitum.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 9.

of the creature on the new plane of supernatural life. The vision of God is accorded to all the saints, but in different degrees. And, according to the mode of vision, they enjoy a greater or a lesser degree of clarity. But as it is God who moves the creature to its beatitude, it will rest with Him to determine to what degree each one is destined, seeing that the finite as such cannot be destined for that vision which God has of Himself, in full comprehension of His Own Essence.¹

(3.) PROSPECTIVE UNITY.

The success or failure of the finite, so far as man himself is concerned, depends on his realising within himself, or not, the unity of his being. He must be true to that deeper dynamism of his nature which takes it beyond itself in search of perfection ; he must hearken to that desire of God which points to the true end of all creation. This very tendency of man's being beyond itself to God indicates that there is for him a law and norm if he is to be in harmony with the laws of being ; obligation is a metaphysical necessity for the finite. Our recognition of the metaphysical disposition of things with God as Final End brings with it the avowal of our obligation to observe it ; to recognise this necessary order of things is to approve it and to concede that it ought to be observed.

True to its natural tendency the rational creature is in harmony with all creation. All being, we have seen, desires God more than itself. The tendency to God is the soul, as it were, of all created being. Love is the universal fact. St. Thomas added a master-touch when he wrote : " The love of God is a uniting force in as much as it leads man's affection from the multiple to the one, whereas the love of self disperses man's affection among many things, in as much

1.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 9.

as man, by this self-love, seeks mere temporal things.”¹ The natural desire of God, accepted by will as faculty of choice, becomes the uniting force, not only of all creation but of man himself.

There is but one alternative on last analysis. The creature must seek the true final end or obtrude unrighteously its own puny self as its own end ; it seeks the true metaphysical unity of things, or loses itself in the labyrinth of multiplicity. When St. Thomas said that sin was the failure to reduce multiplicity to unity, he gave the true philosophic formula ; philosophy is necessarily a search for unity.

If sin is the failure to find the true unity of things, if it is ultimately an unrighteous referring of things to self on the part of the finite, it is because the finite is not unto itself its own end or perfection. To be true to the metaphysical character of his being, man must accept the designs of God who alone is unto Himself an end, and who is the measure and criterion of goodness itself. If he is “capable” of a perfection which he cannot realise by his own natural powers, if in regard to God, as Pure Act, man, considered metaphysically is a being, as it were, merely *in potentia*, it follows that to be true to the ontological order of things man cannot concentrate within himself and confine his ideal to a natural self as final end ; he must be prepared to lose this natural self, if God so wills, to gain his true self.

When St. Thomas, therefore, distinguishes a twofold end of man it is to distinguish an end of which we are capable of our natural powers from the final saturating perfection towards which we naturally tend, but which depends on God’s beneficence for its realisation. Philosophy points at once to the ultimate ideal, and to the necessity for the finite of realising within itself its own unity of tendency and choice, of love and knowledge, of science and action, but it humbly avows its own insufficiency to realise for man the ultimate perfection of which he is “capable.”

Philosophy points beyond itself. Its final gesture is one of self-abasement. For effective realisation of man’s unity,

1.—Ia-IIae., Q. LXXIII, 1, ad. 3.art.

and, through man, of the unity of all being,¹ reason awaits a new light, and will a new love. As with Dante, the hour strikes when Virgil must cease to guide :

“ What reason here discovers, I have power
To show thee : that which lies beyond, expect
From Beatrice, faith not reason's task.”²

1.—Perficitur etiam per hoc quodammodo totius operis divini universitas ; dum homo qui est ultimo creatus, circulo quodam in suum redit principium.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CCI.

2.—*Purg.*, XVIII, 47-48.

APPENDIX A.

IN the present note we shall discuss the three following points: (1) The precise meaning of "natural desire." (2) The distinction which St. Thomas places between the finality of "natural desire" and its realisation. (3) We shall thus be in a position to recognise the fundamental significance of what we have designated "The Principle of Solution" in the wider context of the Saint's system, as well as in the more immediate one from which it is taken.

(I.)

Natural desire in its widest sense has to be linked up with the transcendental property of goodness (Part II, Chap. I.) It is the tendency of being to its perfection:

Finis rei cuiuslibet est in quod terminatur appetitus ejus. Appetitus autem cuiuslibet rei terminatur ad bonum.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XVI. Appetitus naturalis est inclinatio cuiuslibet rei in aliquid ex natura sua; unde naturali appetitu quaelibet potentia desiderat sibi conveniens.—Ia., Q. LXXVIII, art. 1, ad 3. Cf. C.G., lib. I, cap. XXXVII; C.G., lib. II, cap. III.

When St. Thomas has established the metaphysical principle,

omne agens agit propter finem C.G., lib. II, cap. XXIII; C. G., lib. III, cap. II; *De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 15; *De Malo*, Q. I, art. 1; *Ia.*, Q. IV, art. 1

and linked up finality not only with goodness but with truth, he has shown the metaphysical necessity of finality. A nature or an activity that would not be finalised would be contradictory, and in all its amplitude the principle of finality may be stated thus: Being is either an end unto itself, or it is finalised. It is this necessary relation of finality that

St. Thomas has in mind, therefore, when he speaks of "natural desire":

Quamlibet formam sequitur aliqua inclinatio.—Ia., Q. LXXX, art. 1. Inclinatur unumquodque naturaliter ad operationem sibi convenientem secundum suam formam.—Ia-IIae., Q. XCIV, art. 3. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXV, art. 1; C.G., lib. I, cap. LXXXVII.

For the finite it is necessary to distinguish a twofold perfection: on the one hand that elementary perfection which it possesses in virtue of its participation in being, and on the other, that perfection to which it is ordered as its end. The finite can act only in so far as it is, but as it has not being essentially, it can only be by means of its activity that progress towards its end is possible. The metaphysician, interested only in the necessary aspects of being as being, must consider this progress as a possible one:

Cum enim bonum habeat rationem perfectionis et finis, secundum duplicem enim perfectionem et finem creaturae attenditur duplex ejus bonitas. Attenditur enim quaedam creaturae perfectio secundum quod in natura persistit; et haec est finis generationis aut factionis ejus. Alia vero perfectio ipsius attenditur, quam consequitur per suum motum et operationem.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CIX.

There is necessarily an intelligible relation between every particular nature and its end:

Ipsa natura uniuscujusque est quaedam inclinatio indita ei a primo movente, ordinans ipsam in debitum finem. *Metaph.*, lib. XII, lect. 12. Appetere nihil aliud est quam aliquid petere, quasi tendere in aliquid ad ipsum ordinatum.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 1.

We have had occasion to emphasise in the lower orders the ultimate significance of the matter-form theory for the necessary intelligibility of finality and becoming. It is this metaphysical relation of intelligibility that is primarily contained in the adage: *Natura nihil facit inane*. Likewise in the higher orders the same necessity for an intelligible relation to a particular end must come from their particular "forms:"

Sic igitur Deus unicuique rei naturali dedit optimam dispositionem, non quidem simpliciter, sed secundum ordinem ad proprium finem.—Ia., Q. XCI, art. 3.

As the nature points to its end, so the end serves also to characterise the nature :

Sic igitur ex fine sumitur ratio universalitatis formarum in rebus.—C.G., lib. III, cap. XCVII. Cf. C.G., lib. II, cap. LV ; Ia., Q. XCI, art. 1 ; *De Malo*, Q. III, art. 3.

Nothing, therefore, could be clearer than the meaning of “ natural desire ” as signifying the transcendental relation of a particular nature to its end or perfection. Now this relation must be retained if we are to grasp what “ natural desire ” signified for St. Thomas in the different orders of the finite. True, there will be different manifestations of this “ natural desire ” or tendency according to the different orders, but no matter how we are impressed by the striking differences in the activities of differently endowed finite beings, we must admit that the principle of nature has a priority all its own. As finite, these beings are finalised ; they share in a common tendency towards their perfection. Accordingly, when St. Thomas goes on to distinguish three different forms of appetite or tendency, we must not forget that such a distinction can in no sense be absolute ; the metaphysical relation of their respective natures to their perfection remains :

Necesse est ponere in angelis voluntatem. Ad cujus evidentiam considerandum est, quod cum omnia procedant ex voluntate divina, omnia suo modo per appetitum inclinantur in bonum, sed diversimode. Quaedam enim inclinantur in bonum per solam naturalem habitudinem, absque cognitione, sicut plantae et corpora inanimata : et talis inclinatio ad bonum vocatur appetitus *naturalis*. Quaedam vero ad bonum inclinantur cum aliqua cognitione ; non quidem sic quod cognoscant ipsam rationem boni, sed cognoscunt aliquod bonum particulare . . . Inclinationem autem hanc cognitionem sequens dicitur appetitus *sensitivus*. Quaedam vero inclinantur ad bonum cum cognitione qua cognoscunt ipsam boni rationem, quod est proprium intellectus . . . et haec inclinatio dicitur *voluntatis*.—Ia., Q. LIX, art. I. Cf. Ia., Q. VI, art. 1, ad 2 ; Ia., Q. XXIV, art. 4, ad 3 ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 4 ; *De Verit.*, Q. XXV, art. 1 ; C.G., lib. I, cap. LXXII ; C.G., lib. II, cap. XLVII ; Ia-IIae., Q. I, art. 2, ad 3 ; Ia-IIae., Q. IV., art. 2, ad 2.

Lest we be deceived by the apparent opposition, St. Thomas points out explicitly that this division is not exclusive :

Semper prius salvatur in posteriori. Natura autem prior est quam intellectus : quia natura cujuscumque rei est essentia ejus. Unde id quod est naturae oportet salvari etiam in habentibus intellectum. Est autem hoc commune omni naturae ut habeat aliquam inclinationem quae est appetitus naturalis vel amor.—Ia., Q. LX, art. 1.

This "amor," he says, "nihil aliud est quam inclinatio naturae indita ab auctore naturae."—*Ibid.*, ad 3.

It is by a metaphysical analysis of the activities of will and intellect, which have a necessary priority in the order of investigation, that St. Thomas hopes to discover the really prior transcendental relation of the intellectual nature to its end. And again to safeguard his reasoning he is careful to point out :

Voluntas dividitur contra appetitum naturalem *cum præcisione* sumptum, id est qui est naturalis tantum, sicut homo contra id quod est animal tantum; *non autem dividitur contra appetitum naturalem absolute*, sed includit ipsum, sicut homo includit animal.—*De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 5, ad 6 in contr. Quae tamen inclinatio (naturae) diversimode invenitur in diversis naturis, in unaquaque secundum modum ejus. Unde in natura intellectuali invenitur inclinatio naturalis secundum voluntatem.—*Ia.*, Q. LX, art. 1. Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 5.

We have had occasion (Part III, chap. III.) to point out the misinterpretation of St. Thomas that might arise by over-emphasising the opposition of "natural desire" of will and its elicit acts. From the view-point of will-act, we have admitted that there can only be elicit acts, but what we marked was that among such elicit acts, some were eminently calculated to reveal the fundamental orientation of the nature whence they proceed. Such acts which proceed from the will *ut natura* revealed the necessity of its tendencies towards a final end, and as such enabled us to reason to the rational nature itself. It may seem subtle to distinguish between the activity of will *ut natura* and the nature whence it proceeds. Yet, it is necessary. For, as we have emphasised, even the will *ut natura* in its activity implied the presence of knowledge, and our effort was to reach the nature whence the faculties of will and intellect emanate. In this way we rejoin that transcendental relation of finality which St. Thomas designated as *desiderium naturale*.

(2.)

The distinction between the finality of the intellectual nature as such and the realisation possible in virtue of its

natural faculties is a metaphysical necessity. It arises out of the very antinomy of finite mind, whose "capacities" necessarily outstep its powers of realisation. For if the finite mind, left to its natural faculties, can attain God only in His finite manifestations, the intellectual nature as such, has a certain infinity in regard to its object. The object of intelligence and of will is a certain potential infinite being, under its transcendental aspects of truth and goodness. Thus if the activities of will and intellect cannot attain God directly, but only in the formal object of the "good in general" and the "true in general," yet they reveal the fundamental orientation of the nature whence they proceed (Part III, chap. IV.) Accordingly, in the most general terms, St. Thomas lays down :

Divina substantia non sic est extra facultatem intellectus creati quasi aliquid omnino extraneum ab ipso, sicut est sonus a viso, vel substantia immaterialis a sensu . . . sed est extra facultatem intellectus creati *sicut excedens virtutem ejus* ; sicut excellentia sensibilibus sunt extra facultatem sensuum.—C.G., lib. III, cap. LIV.

It is here clearly stated that God is beyond the forces of the created intellect, but something else is at the same time insinuated to the effect that God bears an intelligible relation to mind's adequate object. Examining this relation we have seen that it goes back ultimately to the rational nature as such which has its transcendental relation of finality to God.

It is precisely in virtue of this transcendental relation of finality that mind outsteps the lower orders. If within the order of the relative, there was already a certain adumbration of the distinction of finality and realisation where mind imparts to nature a perfection which it is unable to give itself, it is when we view the relation of mind itself to the infinite of being that this distinction begins to have its full meaning. When St. Thomas claimed for mind a certain "immediate relation to the Principle of being,"

(IIa-IIae., Q. II, art. 3)

he was emphasising its wide horizon in the order of finality.

When he constantly speaks of natural beatitude as that attainable by natural forces,

Ia., Q. XXIII, art. 1; Ia., Q. CVIII, art. 4; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 1; *De Verit.*, Q. XIV, art. 2, ad 3.

he did not forget to add that in the order of finality there was the relation of mind to its ultimate end; for it is the unique privilege of man to be ordained to an end beyond his natural forces:

Quamvis homo naturaliter inclinetur in finem ultimum, non potest tamen naturaliter illum consequi, sed solum per gratiam; et hoc est propter eminentiam illius finis.—*In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. VI, art. 4, ad 5.

In the order of finality St. Thomas explicitly says that God moves the human intellect, and when he wishes to elucidate the ultimate relation of mind to God it is in function of finality. For if there is a certain proportionability of mind in regard to God, it is because God is the ultimate perfection for mind. The perfection of mind must be found, at least, terminatively in God:

Unde in hoc ponimus beatitudinem rationalis creaturae, quod Deum per essentiam videbit: sicut Philosophi, qui posuerunt animas nostras fluere ab intelligentia agente, posuerunt ultimam felicitatem hominis in continuatione intellectus nostri ad ipsam.—*Quodl.*, X, Q. VIII, art. 17.

Nor is Aquinas embarrassed by the question as to what proportion can there be between the finite intellect and God who is Infinite in Act. To solve it he has recourse to the order of finality. It is interesting to mark the reply he makes to this objection, since it shows that while there could be no tendency of the finite mind to a "comprehension" of the Divine Essence, yet there can be towards the vision of God who is the finite's perfection:

Proportio dupliciter dicitur. Uno modo proprie, secundum quod importat quemdam determinatum excessum; et sic proportio requiritur inter intellectum et intelligibile ad hoc quod sit cognitio cum comprehensione, qualiter divina essentia nunquam videbitur ab intellectu creato. Alio modo dicitur communiter pro qualibet habitudine, et sic infinitum potest habere proportionem ad finitum si sit perfectio ejus, vel aliquam hujusmodi habitudinem habeat ad ipsum: et talis proportio sufficit ad hoc quod intellectus noster videat divinam essentiam attingendo, non comprehendo.—*Quodl.* X., Q. VIII, art. 17, ad 1.

As it is the more ultimate in the metaphysical order which must explain the more immediate, we are thus compelled to see in the fundamental relation in the order of finality of mind to God the explanation of mind's activities and "capacities" in the order of effective realisation. It is the "natural desire" of mind for God which is the ultimate metaphysical explanation of mind's relations to God. Appertaining to the strict order of intelligibility and finality it cannot imply in the order of realisation an "exigency" for the divine vision, nor an effective tendency towards it, thereby assuring the transcendence of the supernatural, by showing that such a vision is beyond its natural forces. Further, it helps to establish that harmony of nature and the supernatural which St. Thomas was so anxious to retain: *Gratia non destruit naturam sed perficit*. This it does by showing in the order of finality the fundamental orientation of the rational nature to its ultimate end. If in the order of realisation mind enjoys a *potentia obedientialis* it is because already in the order of finality mind is open for a perfection which it cannot procure of itself. We have emphasised the fact (Part III, chap. I.) that within the plane of the relative the *potentia obedientialis* assumes characteristic modalities according to the different natures of which there is question while retaining its "passivity" in regard to God. It is the "natural desire" of mind for God's vision which explains mind's particular modality. For if, as we have said, God can out of the very stones of the wayside lift up children to Abraham, yet by that very fact they cease to be stones, but if the intellectual nature is elevated to God's vision, it will not cease to be itself for that which is deepest in it, its ultimate relation of finality, will be realised.

(3.)

The foregoing by showing that the distinction of finality and realisation, where intellectual nature is concerned, is ultimate in Thomistic metaphysics, amply justifies the use

we have made of the "Principle of Solution" (Part III, chap. II.) For God alone perfect beatitude is natural; for the creature its final end. As the creature may attain its perfection by its activity, it is essential to distinguish where such an end is realisable by the creature's activity as such, and where it is not. In the case of man, we have seen, the really ultimate end is not attainable by his natural forces, and that relatively final end which is so attainable is subordinate to the really ultimate end. As this ultimate end exceeds the natural forces and effective tendencies of the finite mind, it can only be expected as a "gift." The way for such a gift is prepared by grace, and it is by grace that the creature may merit his final end. Accordingly, the context from which we have taken this fundamental principle is in function of that important distinction of finality and realisation which is the key to the apparent antinomies of the Saint's expressions which in their turn are but the outer expression of the fundamental antinomy of mind itself. The context is as follows :

Quaelibet autem res ad ultimum finem per suam operationem pertingit. Quae quidem operatio in finem ducens, vel est factiva finis, quando finis non excedit virtutem ejus quod operatur propter finem, sicut medicatio est factiva sanitatis; vel est meritoria finis, quando finis excedit virtutem operantis propter finem, unde expectatur finis ex dono alterius. Beatitudo autem ultima excedit et naturam angelicam et humanam.—Ia., Q. LXII, art. 4.

APPENDIX B.

THE objection, that because the object of the will is the *bonum in communi* the natural desire of God's vision must be rejected, has at first sight a certain plausibility. It is really at the source of many writers' difficulty in admitting such a desire. The natural object of the will is "the good in general," something therefore abstract and indeterminate, whereas the vision of God is a definite and particular object.

An important distinction has here to be made. In the psychological order, in the order of activity, the formal object of the will is undoubtedly "the good in general," just as that of intelligence is "the true in general." In the metaphysical order, however, this natural object of the will cannot be cut off from its relation to God. As has been insisted throughout our work, in the metaphysical order God is a necessary priority. He is the First-Desired, and if "the good in general" is the attraction of the finite will, it can only be because of the deeper tendency to God. By the same necessity, with which God is the First Cause, He is the Final End, and as the causality of the end is that of tendency, the ultimate tendency of the finite is towards God. This priority, be it understood, is an ontological one; it has not an immediate value for the conscious activity of will.

Where the objection insists on the psychological priority of the "good in general," St. Thomas had before his mind the necessary ontological priority, and instead of arresting his regard, the "good in general" was for him at once a sign and a proof of the ontological priority of God in the action of the finite. He saw clearly that if the will is moved by the "good

in general," it was because ontologically the will sought God :

Deus movet voluntatem hominis, sicut universalis motor ad universale objectum voluntatis, quod est bonum, et sine hac universali motione homo non potest aliquid velle.—Ia-IIae., Q. IX, art. 6, ad 3. Cf. C.G., lib. III, cap. CVII ; *De Pot.*, Q. III, art. 7, ad 7 ; *In Boethium de Trinit.*, Q. I, art. 1 ; II-IIae., Q. XXVII, art. 4.

As object of the will, the "good in general" was for him a sign of the ultimate orientation of the intellectual nature as such to God :

Natura autem rationalis in quantum cognoscit universalem boni et entis rationem habet immediatum ordinem ad universale essendi principium.—IIa-IIae., Q. II, art. 3.

But not only was it a sign of the "capacity" of the intellectual nature, but it was a proof of its ultimate relation to God. Granting that on the part of the finite rational nature there could not be a tendency to an *activity* beyond its powers, we cannot for that reason deny in the order of finality a transcendental relation to an *object* beyond its forces. In effect it is impossible that this "tendency" or relation of finality of a real being should imply merely a relation to the abstract "good in general." As tendency it implies that object wherein the "good in general" is realised :

Res enim appetitur, prout est in sua natura.—Ia., Q. LXXVIII, art. 1, ad 3. Magis trahitur anima per vim appetitivam quam per vim apprehensivam. Nam per vim appetitivam anima habet ordinem ad ipsas res prout in seipsis sunt.—Ia-IIae., Q. XXII, art. 2.

Further, we have seen how the activity of will implied a tendency to the final end, and the necessity of a final end for the intelligibility of the rational nature as such (Part III, chap. II.) If from the view-point of activity this final end does assume for will the abstract form of the "good in general," yet in the ontological order of finality this connatural object of will cannot be dis severed from the really final end. It is just the antinomy of the rational nature that it bears a relation to an end which surpasses its powers of realisation. On the one hand its very finitude reduces it in the order of realisation to an indirect acquisition of God in His finite manifestations, but this cannot destroy the quasi-infinitude

of the intellectual nature as such. Now it is just the " bonum in communi " which reveals this quasi-infinity of mind :

Virtus autem passiva voluntatis se extendit ad bonum in universali.—Ia., Q. CV, art. 4.

Every created object which is willed in function of the " bonum in communi " is finite and, therefore, cannot render an intelligible account of that infinite capacity of the intellectual nature. St. Thomas, accordingly, argues precisely from the " bonum in communi " to God as Final End :

Impossibile est beatitudinem hominis esse in aliquo bono creato. Beatitudo enim est bonum perfectum, quod totaliter quietat appetitum; alioquin non esset ultimus finis si adhuc restaret aliquid appetendum. *Objectum autem voluntatis. quae est appetitus humanus, est universale bonum, sicut objectum intellectus est universale verum. Ex quo patet quod nihil potest quietare voluntatem hominis nisi bonum universale quod non invenitur in aliquo creato . . .* Unde solus Deus voluntatem hominis implere potest . . . In solo igitur Deo beatitudo hominis constituitur.—Ia-IIae., Q. II, art. 8. Hoc autem est bonum in communi, in quod voluntas naturaliter tendit, sicut etiam quaelibet potentia in suum objectum, *et etiam ipse finis ultimus*, qui hoc modo se habet in appetibilibus sicut prima principia demonstrationem in intelligibilibus.—Ia-IIae., Q. X, art. 1. Nec necessitas naturalis repugnat voluntati: quinimo necesse est, quod sicut intellectus ex necessitate inhaeret primis principiis, ita voluntas ex necessitate inhaereat ultimo fini, qui est beatitudo.—Ia., Q. LXXXII, art. 1. Cf. C.G., lib. I, cap. LX; Ia., Q. LXII, art. 8, ad 2; Ia-IIae., Q. XVII, art. 9, ad 2; Ia., Q. LXIV, art. 1.

The only question that could arise then is to know if this necessary relation of the intellectual nature as such to its final end is consonant with free-will. The ultimate explanation of this problem carries us back to the fundamental principle that for God beatitude is natural, and for the finite its final end :

Voluntas autem deficere non potest respectu boni quod est ipsius volentis natura: quaelibet res suo modo appetit suum esse perfectum, quod est bonum uniuscujusque: *respectu boni vero exterioris deficere potest bono sibi connaturali contenta*. Cujus igitur volentis natura est ultimus finis voluntatis ipsius, in hoc defectus voluntariae actionis contingere non potest: hoc autem solius Dei est: nam ejus bonitas, quae est ultimus finis rerum est sua natura. Aliorum autem volentium natura non est ultimus finis voluntatis eorum: unde potest in eis defectus voluntariae actionis contingere per hoc quod voluntas remanet fixa in proprio bono non tendendo ulterius in summum bonum, quod est ultimus finis. In omnibus igitur substantiis intellectualibus creatis potest defectus voluntariae actionis contingere.—*Comp. Theol.*, cap. CXIII.

From the foregoing text it is clear that it is precisely because the Final End lies beyond the finite that voluntary defect in its regard is possible. If in the metaphysical order the finite, for its very intelligibility, implies a relation to this ultimate end beyond it, yet in the order of activity this ultimate relation is not of such compelling evidence as to compel the will as will. In the order of activity the formal object is the "good in general," and accordingly, St. Thomas having in mind that necessary tendency in the lower orders, "*pondus naturae*," could well say that in that sense there was not a desire for the Divine Vision, while holding in the order of finality the transcendental relation of the nature to its end. It is in the order of activity that St. Thomas opposes the tendency of will to that of mere natural objects, and even there the opposition, as we have seen, was not an absolute one. For though the object of the will's activity is the "good in general" *formaliter*, yet *materialiter* its tendency is to God "in quo tamen secundum rei veritatem sua beatitudo consistit." In this way St. Thomas realised his project of retaining the possibility of merit side by side with the necessary tendency towards beatitude.

Cf. *De Verit.*, Q. XXII, art. 7; *Sent.*, lib. IV, d. 49, Q. I, art. 3.

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